

Anniversary Reflections

By August Pieper

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The past year, 1922, was a special anniversary year in our circles. Our sister synod of Missouri, founded in 1847, celebrated the 75th year of its existence, and the entire Synodical Conference, which originated in 1872, its 50th year. Naturally, the anniversary of the latter looser association did not make as much of an impact on pastors and people as the former made on our brethren in Missouri since their celebration involved closer synodical ties. The Synodical Conference anniversary was, therefore, also celebrated much less generally than that of the Missouri Synod.

We of Wisconsin—I use the expression also in what follows in a wider sense [that is, meaning the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Other States]—have in the course of years become so closely linked with the Missourians that, although we, of course, took little outward part in their synodical celebration, inwardly we took a personal interest in it. The founding of the Missouri Synod is really also for us of Wisconsin of greater significance than our formal union with it in a confessional fellowship.

Missouri actually brought the Synodical Conference into existence, even if the outward impetus for establishing it came from Ohio. During a long period of danger, Wisconsin helped to keep the Synodical Conference essentially together because spiritually we were one flesh and blood with Missouri. We helped each other and received help from each other according to the gifts given to us. In connection with our joint work we are in constant communication with one another. In our battle against our common foes we have so completely become “one loaf” that, in spite of our separate synodical administrations, the weal and woe of one of us is inseparably tied to that of the other, and therefore the concern of one is also the concern of the other.

Much more depends now on the spiritual condition and fortune of the Missouri Synod as the larger and more important body than on that of the Wisconsin Synod, since its influence on us for good and evil, for truth and untruth is much greater than our influence is on them. No one will therefore call it inappropriate if we in this spiritual inventory of the Synodical Conference give attention also to Missouri, and even more than to ourselves. We can give the assurance that we have taken the utmost pains to judge *sine ira et studio*, as objectively as possible. It is self-evident that this judgment is not binding on any one; it is simply the personal judgment of the writer. It ought to be judged first of all solely on the basis of whether it is right or wrong. It aims to encourage the reader to reflect on these matters and make his own judgment. Its value and force lie solely in the measure of its objectivity.

In reviewing such large time periods, however, especially when they coincide with such a frightful turn of events in world history as at present, we need to examine thoroughly our spiritual and ecclesiastical resources. The watchfulness, carefulness and faithfulness to which all of God’s promises are attached demand that of us. Both eyes must be pasted shut of the person who does not see that the growing spirit of the times poses dangers for the church of the pure Word and the true faith which will test it to the utmost and shake it to its very core. Storms will engulf the church in comparison with which the temptations it has experienced until now were only a gentle breeze. These will sweep it away if it does not anchor its foundations anew in the eternal foundation, if it does not reinforce its walls, sharpen its weapons and set its house in order.

It is not a question of the outward continuation of our synods or of the Synodical Conference. To speak with Luther, let the devil take them if he can; it does not matter. Nor is it a matter of properly defined, purely formulated doctrine and the proper structure of the church—that is important, but not most important. It is rather a question of the substance and real heart of the gospel itself and of the saving and sanctifying Spirit, who

is inseparably connected with it. These dangers are generally not clearly recognized or properly understood, especially by the younger generation. Since it has grown up in these times and is growing accustomed to them, it does not have concrete points of comparison with earlier better times.

Whoever has more carefully observed the anniversary celebrations held among us and has more closely examined the anniversary literature must have noticed, if he is not entirely lacking the spirit mentioned in 1 Corinthians 2:15f, that much of the praise and thanks which was expressed had to do with externals and vague generalities. Often it did not even touch on the real content of the great spiritual essentials. In fact—what is just as bad—self-criticism, which must accompany all thanksgiving if it is to be pleasing to God, was restricted to the superficial and general confession of the personal helplessness and unworthiness which is usual on such occasions. We are guilty of a lack of spirit, vigor and faithfulness. Dangerous evils have consequently penetrated our entire church life. They originate in the spirit of the world that is blowing all around us, but they went unrecognized and unconfessed. And where the publican's penitent and humble confession is missing because people have become blind to the prevailing evils, without resistance and without concern one plunges headlong into the whirlpool of corruption. No one notices that more and more the gospel, the Spirit and God's grace are lost, because the outward confession, the synod, the structure and life of the congregation, the functions of the ministry—the entire activity of the church—have retained their old forms. If eternal vigilance is the price of civil liberty, it is especially true with respect to the eternal blessings God has given us in Christ through the gospel. As little as a Christian can be saved if he does not work out his salvation with fear and trembling, so little can the church preserve the grace given to it, if it does not continually watch, pray and fight for it.

What have we, the members of the Synodical Conference, received? How much of it do we still have left? In what respect do we need a renewal? How do we pass on to coming generations our spiritual treasure? These are the questions we need to go into honestly and thoroughly in the present times of transition.

I.

Whoever knows the history of the Lutheran church in our country will not fail to recognize that the origin and growth of the Lutheran synods in the Synodical Conference is a providential work of God's grace. This will be especially true if he compares the great thing that has happened among us principally through and after Walther with what was accomplished a hundred years earlier through Muhlenberg. The latter stands before our eyes in the eastern synods of the merger, the United Lutheran Church, synods which have now in a large measure become English. This union is a horrible mixture of the world and Christianity, of the gospel and reason, of Lutheranism and sectarianism, of the church and the lodge. It is an American church in the full bad sense of the word. It differs from the English-American sectarian churches only in the name Lutheran. It pursues its outward goals with the same outward means and measures its worth by its outward success. It is a union which as a result of its principles must of necessity end up in the Federal Council of Churches of Christ.

One dare not, of course, blame Muhlenberg for all of this, and for much of it he was only very indirectly responsible. But the influence he wielded did not serve, or was not strong enough, to prevent the development of this organization. Muhlenberg was a diligent worker, an earnest and fearless Christian and pastor, a tireless gatherer of the scattered little groups of Lutherans living at that time in Pennsylvania and New York, and a not unskilled organizer of larger groups. But he could not create a new, healthy and strong Lutheran life which would have the promise of a great future since he himself did not possess it. He was a moderately gifted preacher, who, except for his skill in witty repartee, possessed little spirit and who was thoroughly crippled by his brand of later Pietism.

The outward circumstances at Muhlenberg's time were also, to be sure, not favorable for establishing an outstanding Lutheran church. It was the time (1742–87) when all the European sects settled in the American colonies. The population was small, and the number of Germans who had immigrated was proportionately small. With the exception of the Salzburgers, they were spiritually badly blighted. The Pietism which pervaded the Lutherans and the sects was not suited to enhance a Lutheran confessional consciousness. Many Lutherans

were absorbed by the sects, and those who remained separate fell prey to confessional indifference. The influx from Europe was composed mostly of English and other non-German people. Only after the period of political reconstruction did the settlement of the states further west take place and give a strong impetus to immigration from Europe, especially from Germany.

When in 1839 the Saxons under Stephan and the Prussians under Grabau and von Rohr came to the United States, the stream of immigration, and in particular of Germans, was in full swing. During Walther's lifetime, especially in the 80s, it increased to such a degree that the rural areas of the present central and northern states took on a predominantly German character, and many cities acquired at least a partly German complexion. Both the Saxons and Prussians came in advance of the great stream and could, as Germans, now gather in with open arms what God laid at their door. It depended only on this, that they understood and carried out the ingathering, and God gave the Saxons, the later Missourians, both in special measure.

It is not our intention here to write history. History is of concern to us only in so far as it is indispensable for an understanding of the ecclesiastical character of the Lutheran synods in the Synodical Conference. And to this belongs—at least in a rough sketch—the development not only of the Missouri Synod, but also of its other constituent bodies. We can disregard the Ohio Synod and the Norwegians, who have disassociated themselves from us again, and also the Norwegian brethren who have come back to us and the Slovak Synod, both of whom have done less to determine the character of the Synodical Conference.

That, however, which now makes up the Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan, and which is, to put it briefly, called Wisconsin, today constitutes numerically not only the largest part of the Conference next to the Missouri Synod, which has 3000 pastors compared to Wisconsin's 500, but has also had a not insignificant influence on its spiritual character. To bring this out clearly, we cannot refrain from saying something at least also about the history of the Wisconsin Synod. The history of both synods will show how the present-day church acquired its predominant spirit and its strong confessional stance. It will show how the inner nature of its church life was shaped and its outward growth occurred. And it will show that we have that one man, Walther, to thank for the greater share by far of all that we have. Wisconsin contributed much less, though its contribution is not insignificant. And it is up to us of Wisconsin to point that out.

It has never been God's way to accomplish some great thing he has in mind through many men equally gifted at the same time. Rather, he bestows on one individual all the natural and spiritual gifts which are necessary to master the circumstances of a critical time and carry out God's plans. At his side he places at the right time and in the right places others who are less gifted indeed but are like-minded and capable. These must take up, carry on and advance the one man's work. In their days there was only *one* great prophet, *one* Paul, *one* Augustine, *one* Luther, and all the others who were with them—even if they had become independent and were entrusted with their own special task—were only helpers of the greater man in carrying out the joint undertaking.

It has been no different in our case. In magnitude and importance Walther's work is less than Luther's only to the extent that Luther's was less than Paul's. The issue here, as with Luther, was nothing less than to reestablish God's pure gospel, which had once again been lost to the world, and to restore the proper form of his church, which had been lost since the days of the apostles and which even in the Reformation was regained only imperfectly. With the pure gospel came a new outpouring of the Spirit such as had not come upon the church since Luther.

After overcoming the sharpest inner conflict, Missouri proceeded to attack the corruption of the gospel, the servitude of the church and everything improper. That has given it its character.

Walther came from a somewhat pietistic circle in rationalistic surroundings. After a great inner struggle he became clear in his faith and certain of his salvation—through a study of Luther. Having held false doctrinal views of all kinds, he came to recognize the biblical purity of Luther's doctrine. He sought peace for his Christian and Lutheran conscience, tormented by the rationalistic tyranny of the state church authorities, by resigning from his pastorate and emigrating to America. He suffered still greater inner distress when Stephan was unmasked and doctrinal confusion followed. In this it was not until after an indescribable spiritual struggle that he found solid ground. This matured him for the great task God placed before him.

The debate in Altenburg in April of 1841 is the real birthday of the Missouri Synod. Here Walther showed *what* the church is and that they [the immigrants] were still a church. With a single immense pull he again set the desperate little flock of Christians straight. The propositions that were the subject of the debate soon developed into Walther's basic writing, *Church and Ministry*. This was followed later by *The Proper Form of an Evangelical Lutheran Congregation*, in which the doctrine was applied to practice, and by his *Pastoral Theology*. Here Walther laid the broad and solid foundation for the future Missouri Synod and for all that it and its affiliated Lutheran bodies developed into, as well as for much that later transpired in other synods. Here Scripture as the infallible Word of God written by the Holy Ghost was the ground where Walther stood firmly rooted. In the Saxons' confusion, when everything else reeled beneath their feet, Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions continued to be their solid foundation.

Walther had not come to a knowledge of the truth, to a clear and firm position, through a direct and independent study of Scripture, but above all through a study of Luther; but he was, of course, no worshiper of Luther. The sin and evil consequences of idolizing men, of which he, too, had been guilty in respect to Stephan, almost brought him at that time to despair. He felt and knew that Luther's doctrine was God's Word. How far he followed Luther he made clear in his classic article "On the Name Lutheran," which ran through the first four issues of *Der Lutheraner* (1844). Indicative of his stance toward Luther is, among other things, his quotation of Luther's statement, "Thus Luther himself does not want to be Lutheran except in so far as he teaches the Holy Scriptures in their purity."ⁱ And Scripture was for Walther, as little as for Luther, a mere mechanical source and norm for what he taught and did. The doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures was for him, as for Luther, a matter not of historical investigation and logical proof, but of faith and personal experience, so that every word of Scripture "made the world too narrow" for him.ⁱⁱ

Every page that Walther wrote, every oral testimony that he gave, every battle that he fought, testifies to his unshakable stand on every word of the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures, to his unconditional trust in them, to his deep reverence and love for them, a love which set everything else aside. Scripture was not for him a dead book of divine truths revealed at some time in the past and of divinely attested events, but God's living, personal and direct words to him for his and all sinners' rescue for eternal life. For that reason he, on the one hand, as little as Luther, accepted the last four books of the New Testament as on a par with the apostolic writings, and shied away from defining the limits of the canon precisely. On the other hand, he took his stand immovably on every word of the prophets and apostles as the word of the Holy Ghost.

No person, no matter how naturally gifted he might be, can accomplish something great in the church unless he stands unswervingly on this foundation. Our Lord has said, "The Scripture cannot be broken" [Jn 10:35], and through Paul he has told us, "This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Holy Spirit" [1 Cor 2:13]. Unconditional faith in the verbal inspiration of the "prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments"ⁱⁱⁱ is therefore as sacred and inviolable a moral requirement as faith in Christ himself in all his words and deeds. Whoever makes the Lord out to be a liar in this has barred the way for the Holy Ghost, who testifies through this word of Christ, too, that the Spirit is truth. And whoever even so much as wavers in this article should not and cannot accomplish anything great in the church, for the Holy Ghost, whom he continually resists, cannot pour out on him the fullness of his power and gifts.

That is the main reason why there has not been a vigorous revival of the church in Germany and in all of Europe since the Reformation. That is also why the present reorganization in the Evangelical church of Germany, as it is called, is a miserable patchwork of leftover old rags. There still are among the leaders a number of personally pious, learned and intellectually capable men, but there is not a single one who steps before the German people in the power of the Holy Spirit with the prophetic announcement, "This is what the Lord Jehovah says!"

But this spirit of childlike, unshakable faith and obedience toward every word of the Holy Spirit coursed through and completely dominated Walther. His heart was filled with it, his conscience was taken captive and all his witnessing and working were controlled and governed by it. For that reason the Holy Spirit was with him in unhindered power. For that reason his word kindled fire and his sword struck sparks. For that reason it was

just through him that God gave his Servant, the Savior, great multitudes as booty and strong ones as spoil [Is 53:12].

But how could Walther achieve such great results simply with the doctrine of the church and its ministry, the doctrine with which he began his teaching activity in this country? Whoever asks this question does not have a clear understanding of its place in the gospel and its importance. Walther did not look for an excuse to treat it but was forced into it through the disturbances in Perry County. There its effect was first of all to produce peace and order in the original congregations. Only later did Walther go public with it. It would have been the mark of a bungler to ride this doctrine like a hobbyhorse as if it were an isolated or special article. The first two volumes of *Der Lutheraner* scarcely touch on it.

It was the open battle of Grabau against this doctrine, which was being discussed privately between him and the Saxons, that first brought Walther also onto the battlefield. Until then, what did Walther discuss in *Der Lutheraner*? The rights and duties of Lutheranism according to Scripture, justification by faith, Word and sacrament as the means of grace, the authority of Scripture, faithfulness to the Confessions and other things, and, most zealously of all, the doctrine of justification. Quite naturally! That is the real heart of the gospel, and it was this for Walther too. One has only to read the first volumes of *Der Lutheraner* to see that Walther totally lived in this doctrine and was completely absorbed in it. Only by proceeding from it had Walther clearly learned the doctrine of church and ministry, which is inseparably connected with justification by faith through Word and sacrament. Church and ministry is but the reverse side of justification, for the church is the congregation of the justified, who have been brought to faith through Word and sacrament and who have been endowed with all of Christ's gifts and called to proclaim God's grace. That is the doctrine of justification as it is practically carried out.

And so the doctrine of church and ministry becomes also the chief touchstone for the purity of the doctrine of justification. It became this for Walther, too, in his battle with his opponents. It continually separated false from true Lutheranism, and it does that still today. But it never was the main subject of Walther's testimony. That was and remained the justification of the sinner before God through faith in Christ alone. That requires no proof, even if one has only a superficial acquaintance with Walther's writings.

Walther preached this doctrine of justification as no one has since Luther. When he preached sin and wrath, hearts quaked with fear; when he testified to God's grace, they embraced it, rejoiced in it, found peace and humbled themselves before God. Walther literally compelled those who were conscience-stricken to take hold of God's offer; those who were fainthearted, he made sure of God's grace.

He did not have the same power in his lectures in the seminary. In dogmatics, the "Baier hour," he was indeed always intellectually interesting, but spiritually he often seemed dry. That is in part, of course, because of the nature of teaching dogmatics. It deals to such a large extent with making distinctions between concepts and with logically grasping them, with intellectual operations which do not touch the heart. In Walther's case this was worse because he kept the Latin textbook and stubbornly adhered to using the Latin language in teaching. It was noticeable that in doing this even Walther was walking on stilts, and most of his students did not fully understand him. For all of them the daily three to five hour "Baier grind,"^{iv} as they in typical student fashion called it, spoiled their joy in God's precious Word.

What Walther lacked in his dogmatics classes, however, he richly made up for as a spontaneous witness to God's grace in and outside other instruction periods. His pastoral theology classes were in large part pastoral care applied to the hearts of his students, not merely instructions on how to perform pastoral work. In these classes he was intolerant of any levity, lack of conscientiousness, and laziness. But for all those who were suffering any anxiety he was a refreshing and encouraging comforter.

Walther appeared in full and matchless power in the so-called Luther hours, which he for a time held weekly with the student body and which were also open to non-students. In them he at first read with the students one or the other of Luther's principal writings. Later, however, he also discussed the chief doctrines of Scripture, especially the doctrine of justification. These lectures, especially his introductions, he prepared most carefully. He arrived at his specific themes from very diverse but mainly practical points of view or by taking up the antithesis, the questions of the day or the great concerns of a sinner's soul. Here he addressed himself

directly to the hearts of his students and knew how to hold their undivided attention. Here with his testimony about grace he changed hearts and produced preachers of grace. Here he communicated something of his own spirit to many of his Students, filled them with love for Christ and his Word, with zeal for God's house and for the purity of the gospel. He made them willing joyfully to put their life into Christ's service wherever they might be sent without asking, "What's in it for me?"^v That Walther had a similar effect in his essays at conferences and synod conventions is the unanimous testimony of those who heard him. His presentations, which in the course of time treated all the chief doctrines of Scripture, were for them times when they grew in their understanding and were refreshed and strengthened for new, fresh work.

But with his testimony Walther aimed not merely at producing a living, deep, joyful and zealous life of faith. He always insisted also at the same time on a pure and exact understanding of doctrine. This was not simply because of a dogmatical attitude, but because of Walther's deepest reverence for every part of the divine Word and because of his anxious concern that replacing the truth of God with human wisdom, with false doctrine, would becloud the way to salvation for sinners and would rob God's Word of its divine power to justify, convert, comfort and sanctify sinners. This was the reason for his scrupulous adherence to the Confessions, his emphasis on "pure doctrine," his intensive pursuit of scholastic Lutheran dogmatics, his hatred of all false doctrine and all unionism, his frequent rough treatment of opponents and his anger at the theory of open questions and its defenders. For that reason he emphasized, taught and dealt with the distinction between law and gospel as no one has since Luther. The mixing of the two was for him the complete destruction of the Word and its power, a thousand times worse than erring in an individual point of doctrine. There can be no more careful and thorough work than Walther's *Law and Gospel*.

In this point, too, Walther was not only a clear and objective teacher, but a victorious witness who caused hearts to tremble and won them over. His opponents often accused him of unchristian contentiousness. This reproach he shared with Luther, but none could be more unjust. Inwardly he shrank from every dispute. He always stood in fear of his own weakness. He was always apprehensive about the possible harm to the kingdom of God. He postponed treating the doctrine of election till toward the end of his life because he was afraid that strife and division in the church would result. And when he could no longer avoid treating it and the 1877 Altenburg synod convention approached, out of great concern for the future of the church he asked the entire student body to pray in his behalf for the Holy Ghost and in the synod's behalf for the preservation of its unity. Never, not even in the first disturbances [at the time of Stephan's exposure] was he inwardly so totally depressed. Never did he pray so fervently as when the fire of conflict was kindled and threatened to destroy everything which God had so magnificently built up over a long period of time. But when the conflict came and required him to enter the battlefield with his voice and pen, the trembling lamb became a lion with a sense of power and victory. "You want war; war you shall have!" Whenever he stood on the battlefield, he had "the strength of a wild ox" (Nu 23:22), and the power of his testimony carried along with it all those who were of the truth, or straightened out again those who were erring because of weakness.

It grieved Walther to the depths of his heart that at that time all outside the Synodical Conference who were called Lutheran rose up as one man against him, that previously embittered enemies saw in this strife an opportunity to vent their anger on him, and that Ohio fell away and drew some Missourians along. But all this was not surprising. It was a miracle of grace, however, that the Synodical Conference did not go to pieces entirely and that the Missouri Synod, on the whole, emerged from the conflict intact, and, in fact, together with Wisconsin, inwardly strengthened and unified. For in the conflict concerning the doctrine of election, Walther had to fight, not for an individual truth against an isolated error, but for the gospel as a whole and for the authority of the divine Word against the arrogance of human reason.

That he emerged victorious from this conflict and led the church to make the joyful confession: God's Word is also then most certainly true and a most precious Word, that is, deserving full acceptance, when even the soundest natural human reason finds an undeniable self-contradiction in it—that is unique in the history of the church since the days of the apostles. In Luther's time there was no conflict concerning this doctrine in the Lutheran church. Luther's book about the bondage of the will was directed against a humanist on the outside. And when the Formula of Concord met with acceptance among most pastors in this article also, that did not

happen after years Of general discussion of the disputed points nor with a full understanding and joyful willingness, but to a large extent because the power of the princes dictated peace.^{vi} In our case it was only the clear and powerful testimony of Walther and his fellow combatants that rallied the present Synodical Conference joyfully around his thirteen theses.

As a Spirit-filled witness of grace toward poor sinners, as an immovable confessor of God's pure truth and as an indefatigable, self-denying worker, Walther created what we have today in the Synodical Conference and all that has come out of it. The expansion of the Missouri Synod and of the church in fellowship with it—especially with its confessional stringency and exclusiveness, its discipline in doctrine and life and with its great weaknesses, which we intend to touch on later—is a marvel before the eyes of all. It is not necessary to mention the number of members it has at present and its impressive undertakings.

What was the reason for this almost unparalleled growth? Walther had a noteworthy talent for organization, that is true. He gave the local congregation and his synod an effective constitution, not, as has been said overseas, either out of ignorance or malice, according to the political pattern that is found in the United States, but on the basis of the doctrine of the church and its ministry championed in his previously mentioned books on the subject. But it was not the democratic constitution that attracted people and made Missouri great and strong. Other church bodies here have that too, without having the same success. It is, furthermore, not the democratic but the monarchical and even the hierarchical form of constitution which has shown itself to be the most efficient on earth, as can be seen in the papacy and Freemasonry.

But constitutions, arrangements and systems are in themselves dead things; they do not guarantee success. It is the men, the intellectual forces which stand behind the system, and the work they do, that produce results. In his kingdom of grace, too, God has made the results dependent on faithful, diligent labor, although he has reserved the size of the blessing to his own power.

Missouri has become great through the labor of Walther and of his students, the Missouri pastors, professors, teachers, church councilmen and laity. They went with the times, that is, with great faithfulness and singular zeal they made the most of the opportunities God gave them. To speak with Luther, they bought while the market was at the door, harvested while the sun shone and the weather was good. Whoever thinks about the work of the earlier Missouri itinerant preachers will be reminded of Paul's diligence. We see something that was never seen in the church before—hundreds of pastors teaching school, among whom were some who, in spite of receiving the most meager support, to old age, yes, to the end of their life conducted congregational schools in addition to doing their pastoral work in one or even more congregations. And there are still hundreds of such pastors today, after the congregations have become well-to-do. Scarcely any church body could show that they have workers who are more diligent in their office than Missouri pastors. They have labored in this way without compulsion and without earthly reward, because of their love of Christ in order to save souls, out of zeal for the house of the Lord. This, too, is to be traced back to Walther's spirit, to his confessional loyalty and to his own inspiring example.

Walther was enough of a Christian, psychologist and churchman to realize that without special educational institutions the church cannot secure qualified preachers and teachers of the gospel. These are, of course, indispensable for the edifying, gathering and perfecting of the body of Christ. Without Christian schools the children of the church cannot be brought up to be good Christians. With his colleagues, therefore, Walther immediately founded an institution which was at once an elementary school, high school and college [the German *gymnasium* was a combination of the latter two], and seminary. In every parish a parochial school was immediately organized, and Walther proclaimed this motto: Next to every Lutheran church a Lutheran school! But he also placed in all these institutions and schools men of his spirit and zeal for work, who labored with the same faithfulness as he did without rest or relaxation. Thus he became the founder of the Lutheran parochial school in this country and thereby produced one of the chief means for the growth of the church.

How strongly Walther emphasized the parochial school is demonstrated, among other things, by the twelfth of his theses concerning church fellowship: "It is a crying contradiction to its profession if a church body which calls itself Lutheran and desires to be Lutheran evinces no earnestness and zeal to establish, as far as lies within its power, *orthodox parochial schools* where they do not exist." And concerning institutions for

training pastors and teachers he says in Thesis 16: “As a matter intimately connected with its confession, every Lutheran synod, in order to preserve the church, will on its part work with all diligence to establish and help maintain orthodox schools for the training of faithful and competent preachers and school teachers” (*Synodical Report*, 1873).

And how Walther worked! He did not merely faithfully administer his office in one particular place and conscientiously carry out every task assigned to him, as any ordinary competent official or employee would do. (Who determines the daily schedule for a person responsible for overall leadership like Moses, Paul or Luther!) Walther also did not spare himself in carrying out the duties of each particular office—as pastor, professor and president. But in his assignment that was only secondary work, most of it routine. His thoughts, concerns and efforts revolved around the work as a whole. Like Paul, he faced the daily pressure and problems of all the congregations. Without letup he had on his heart the correct preaching of the gospel within the synod, its spread beyond the synod’s boundaries, the development of the educational institutions, the deepening and strengthening of the congregations and pastors, the excellence of the parochial school system, the preservation of doctrinal purity and the faithful administration of discipline, the persuasion of honorable opponents and the defeat of obstinate foes. He did not drift with circumstances, he controlled them. He continually anticipated them. In part he created them and put his stamp on them. He sought to make every part of revealed truth a possession of the church, to make every aspect of God’s will a reality in his synod, to ward off every error and root out every false practice. He was the Atlas of his synod.

The most private troubles in the heart and the biggest concerns of the kingdom of God were finally all addressed to him. His whole life was thus a daily strain on the nerves and an intensive use of his mental and physical powers which was rarely interrupted. How this man with the small, frail body prayed, studied, stood guard, racked his brains and tortured his heart from early youth to a ripe old age! How much he wrote! How much he ran and rode and travelled by land and water! How often he preached, lectured, read essays, presented papers, debated and battled! Second Corinthians 11 applies in a large measure also to him, as it did to Luther. It’s no wonder that several times he almost broke down completely and was close to death, and once was on the verge of losing his mind. It’s a miracle that God preserved his life so long so that he might finish his work. Much of this zest for work he passed on to his students and synodical colleagues.

Accompanying Walther’s zeal for doctrinal purity and the growth of the church was his concern for shaping the life of the church in harmony with Scripture. His book on *Church and Ministry* was followed by his little book *The Proper Form*. Its contents are too well known to make it necessary to go into details here. What the teaching in these books requires, Walther in large measure made a reality both within the Missouri Synod and far beyond its borders, not only in this country but also in others. He accomplished this through his spirit, which he had the gift to impart in greater or lesser measure to pastors, professors, teachers and laity. The form of a congregation in Missouri serves virtually as a model, above all in the aspects required by God’s Word. We call attention here, in addition to the just mentioned establishment of a parochial school for the education of the young, to announcement for confession, communion practice and church discipline. In all these things conditions in Missouri were on the whole better than elsewhere, also in the way they were handled.

Missouri’s handling of the lodge question is deserving of special mention. How Walther himself stood on this matter he spelled out, among other occasions, at the second convention of the Synodical Conference in his ninth thesis on church fellowship. There he says, “This contradiction [between confession and practice] also occurs when members of their congregations who, before becoming members, were members of secret societies and after becoming members of the church continue their membership in such societies, and the pastors involved neither give thoroughgoing public testimony against these societies in their sermons, clearly demonstrating that they are contrary to Scripture and our faith, nor do they give the individual lodge members special instructions and pastoral care.”

Let it be noted that this statement contains the minimum demand for our dealing with lodge members within the congregation. It presupposes that lodgism and Christianity are two absolutely incompatible things. This position we find clearly explained and strongly emphasized already in the fifth and sixth volumes of *Der Lutheraner* and, of course, in the justly famous debate on the question, “May a Christian join the so-called

secret societies?” From everything also that Walther later wrote and published on this question it is clear that he would under no circumstances permit lodge members to be tolerated in a Christian congregation. His demand is, rather, that every pastor not only give “public testimony in his sermons” against the lodge, but also that he immediately take every lodge member in the congregation under special pastoral care.

With this last point he wishes to oppose, on the one hand, an unconcerned, unprincipled toleration of lodge members and, on the other hand, a convenient but equally unchristian mere automatic exclusion of them from the congregation. Because such congregation members are as such, of course, under the pastor’s spiritual care but through their lodge membership are in great spiritual danger, are denying Christ and are giving “grave offense” to all Christians, the pastor must fulfill his pastoral responsibility toward them also through “special” care. This should not cease until the person in question has either been won over or else has become manifest as a non-Christian. At the same time Walther guarded against a misunderstanding of his advice, as if he wanted such lodge members after a first and second fruitless admonition simply to be left alone and tolerated. The pastoral instruction must be given with love and patience, but it is of the right kind only if it brings the one admonished to a decision. If the private pastoral care does not accomplish this, one must then earnestly admonish him according to Matthew 18 with the help of one or two others. If that, too, is not successful, one must tell it to the congregation. If the congregation’s admonition is of no avail, it should remove him. When a congregation is not mature enough, however, to exercise discipline with proper understanding in this particular issue of the lodge, the pastor should nevertheless exclude him from Holy Communion and from absolution.

Under no circumstances does Walther want a lodge member to be received into membership in a congregation or, unless in danger of death, admitted to communion. But his position was that a person who already belonged to a congregation and then was discovered to be a lodge member should be admitted to the sacrament during the initial period of special admonition as long as he still had to be considered a weak brother. We will have something to say later on this last point. But this much is clear, that Walther insisted on a complete and absolute separation from lodgery. The man who till his death fought against every association with a false confession or anything ungodly also wanted nothing to do with the “idolatrous” lodge. He realized that thereby he was forgoing a large and influential increase in the church, yes, that this would make the lodge a powerful and treacherous mortal enemy of the church, comparable in this respect only to the papacy. But this was his greatness and the basis of his authority and success, that under no circumstances and at no price was he to be deflected, even in the smallest matter, from what he clearly recognized as the Word of God. In his faithfulness lay his strength.

In the Missouri Synod there is a remarkable, intense esprit de corps, a strongly pronounced synodical patriotism, a strong tendency to stick together, not only against all enemies, but also over against friendly synods. In vain until now have its enemies tried to breach its walls or drive a wedge into this Macedonian phalanx. In vain have they waited for its collapse and foretold its disintegration. Till now it has, however, withstood every danger and repelled every attack. It emerged from the trial by fire of the election controversy rejuvenated, strengthened and more united than ever. There is quite a human element in all of this and some things that are offensive. But essentially it is a Christian, spiritual thing—the awareness of unity in the Spirit, in the pure doctrine of the gospel and of true Lutheranism, the feeling of a special, precious brotherhood, which is to be preserved and cultivated under all circumstances.

This, too, Walther’s great spirit created. Few great men in the church have with greater power and success than he created a following. The people he attracted from outside Missouri—the Franconians and Hanoverians, the Ohio, Illinois and Wisconsin synods and others—all fell under the spell of his gospel, the spirit of his testimony and his sanctified personality. Whoever came into personal contact with him had to take a liking to him and involuntarily looked up to him. The longer one knew him, the greater was one’s respect for him. The others were all directly or indirectly his students. Three years in St. Louis were enough to make one a Waltherian in doctrine and love.

Walther not only laid the greatest stress on purity of doctrine, but he also made one conscious of possessing the pure doctrine in full measure and created a zeal to retain it with might and main under all circumstances and spread it. In addition, there was the similar schooling all received and the intensive,

standardized drill which led to the same way of looking at things, the same way of thinking and of performing the duties of the ministry. This made Missouri an ecclesiastical Prussian army. The institutions founded in the synod and the undertakings begun by it embody for every Missourian a piece of Walther's spirit, which must be supported and strengthened as a precious heritage. That is what is praiseworthy about Missouri's unity.

Before we leave Walther and the Missouri Synod, however, and go on to a description of the Wisconsin Synod, we need to give attention to a particular point in order to appreciate fully the heritage left to us by Walther.

II.

What we intend to say here may perhaps be summed up in the words "restitution of the theology of the 16th century." This was the phrase with which the so-called positive theologians of Germany tried to stigmatize Walther's theology. Walther was censured because he did not approach theology from a scientific point of view. He did not develop a dogmatical system of his own. He did not produce a single original scientific-theological thought and therefore did not advance theological knowledge one step. He simply uncritically warmed over the theology of Luther and of those who were his faithful students to the time of Chemnitz and the Formula of Concord. If one strikes the word "uncritically" from this stricture, then—thank God—it's true.

This criticism was well known to Walther. Far from being ashamed of it, however, he considered it his highest honor. In direct response to it, he often confessed that he brought nothing of his own to light, taught nothing new. In everything he as the most insignificant of Luther's students only "stammeringly repeated" Luther and his other earlier faithful students. If, after Rationalism had devastated the church in Germany, German theology would also have conscientiously done that as Walther did, Germany would certainly still be standing today. Instead, misled by the rationalistic historical criticism of Scripture as the revealed Word of God and fully aware of what it was doing, it rejected the cry, "Back to Luther." After the hardships of the Napoleonic age, God had again permitted this rallying cry to be heard in Germany. But Germany no longer had the confidence to step before the world with its fist on the Bible. Befogged by the halo of science, it has thrown itself into the arms of Schleiermacher, the "savior of religion." Although he himself did not believe a single article of the gospel, he hoodwinked himself and the educated people of Germany into thinking that from a subjective religious feeling, from a religious experience of God, one could scientifically prove that the essentials of Christianity are something supermundane and divinely produced.

With few exceptions, the so-called positive theologians of the universities of Germany who want to be Lutheran have not "stammeringly repeated" Luther, the divinely sent Reformer of the church. Instead, in their method they have clung to the coattails of that hapless fellow Schleiermacher. Against the attacks of the philosophy of religion, natural science and historical criticism, they want to establish—not the infallibility of Scripture, on which Luther naively (!) still stood—but the essentials of the Christian gospel. For proof of our assertion we need only point to von Hofmann, Frank and Ihmels, a chain of theologians who were intellectually the most competent of those that can be mentioned as German theologians who still want to be Lutheran. Each student in this chain corrects his teacher in some respect. The last one even takes unbelievable pains to regain as much as possible of Luther's position.^{vii} But he also does not break out of the path worn by his teachers: the attempt to prove from the reality and from the contents of a Christian's subjective certainty of salvation the basic facts of Christian truth and the thereby supposedly proven objective authority of Scripture—in so far as it teaches the truths of salvation. All three of them swim in Schleiermacher's stream against the overpowering current of modern unbelieving science without admitting that they are being swept away by it. They fail to see that the infallibility and universal validity of Christian experience which they propound is a scientific monstrosity, since there is nothing more deceitful than the human heart, and since faith, of course, is *not* something everyone has.

To create faith, Christian faith, no "modern methodical study of history," no "religious-psychological analysis," no "strict theory of knowledge, which is, however, also tempered," no "scientific proof of the reality

of an eternal metaphysical world” will be of any help.^{viii} Only one thing can create faith—that we take and preach the Word of Scripture, which cannot be broken, as preachers who have authority (ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχοντες, Mt 7:29), that we preach, declaring, “This is what the Lord says!” and let him who will, believe it; let him who will, despise it. That’s the way Moses and the prophets did it, the way the Lord himself and the apostle did it (cp 1 Cor 2) and the way Luther operated, and they were successful. They did not try to prove scientifically that the gospel is true. Conscious of its divine origin, they preached it and believed that it would be effective through its own divine power. And they were not disappointed. That is exactly what Walther did in America, and this was the reason for his phenomenal success.

Walther repristinated Luther from his doctrine of Scripture and doctrine of justification to his doctrine of usury and of in-law marriage, from *The Bondage of the Will*^{ix} to the doctrine of the pastoral ministry and of the authority of the local congregation. Walther did this, we repeat, basically not because he believed blindly in Luther (the objective critic will have to admit a certain weakness in this respect, which we will come to later), but because he saw and perceived in everything that Luther stood with both feet on Scripture.

Walther did not preach Luther, but Scripture. For, like Luther, he believed every word of Scripture with a fearful earnestness, a blessed wonder and a triumphant consciousness of victory. Walther did not add one iota to our orthodox teachers’ doctrine of inspiration. He did not interpret mechanically every mechanical expression of the 17th century as the so-called positive theologians of Germany did. For that reason also he did not have to strike any of those expressions, as they did. He believed Scripture, preached Scripture and created faith in Scripture, while they believed, not in Scripture, but in their scientific system. They undermined the faith in Scripture of the poor German pastors and lay people without being able to produce faith in their scientific fabrications.

Luther, too, was no great man in the modern theological-scientific sense, no speculative philosophical genius. He didn’t enrich the world with a single new scientific truth or philosophical idea. To the end he was and remained a copier of Paul, Peter, John—of Scripture, and he wanted to be nothing else. He rejected every new revelation of the enthusiasts and every speculative idea of the sophists, the old philosophers and the new sacramentarians. He knew only one thing: It is written.

Walther broke consciously with all modern theology and even with the “Lutheran” theology of Schleiermacher. With a heavy heart he broke with the Erlangen school and with Loehe. He broke with the latter, not so much because Loehe represented somewhat hierarchical ideas of the ministry, as because, ultimately, like the Erlangen school, he was not able to free himself completely from Schleiermacher. This was demonstrated by his position on the Confessions, open questions and the scientific development of doctrine. Walther’s Luther-like stance toward Scripture also separated him permanently from the later disciples of Loehe. Like Luther, he considered no Word of God an open question, bowed humbly beneath every Word of God and banished from the church every human invention. Also in this rugged exclusiveness he was a faithful copier of Luther, Paul and Scripture. For him there could be no reconciliation between the modern scientific theology of experience and the Lutheran theology of Scripture.

Walther first issued a call back to Luther, to full Lutheranism. This was, on the one hand, because of the trend of his times. As a reaction against Rationalism, which had a withering effect on soul and spirit, a hunger and thirst for the fresh waters of Scripture was produced in the hearts of those who still believed. The cry, “Back to Luther,” in Germany, too, meant nothing else than “Back to holy Scripture.” Just think of the theses of Claus Harms. That the result over there was only to a small degree a return to Scripture was not especially the fault of the newly awakened science. The chief blame for this failure lay in Schleiermacher’s theology, which opened the door for university theologians to maintain their reputation as scientific scholars alongside the other faculties.

The breakaway of the Breslau Lutherans from the state church also originated in this movement, as did the decision of the Saxon pastors and pastoral candidates to join Stephan’s emigration. Wyneken, Sihler, Ernst, all the men sent out by Loehe, the Buffalo Synod people and even the great majority of those who made up the Wisconsin and Minnesota synods were also all swept up in the trend toward true Lutheranism, in spite of their diverse origins. It was therefore self-evident and altogether inevitable that Walther, who himself had been so

strongly caught up in this movement, summoned people to Luther's banner. True Lutheranism, however, in contrast to the theology that tried to be scientific, meant, of course, scriptural theology.

Walther, on the other hand, had not arrived at an understanding of grace through scholarly study but in the practical way Luther came to it. It is an inherent characteristic of faith, of course, that it goes to the ultimate attainable source of truth, to the infallible mouth of God himself, to see if those things are true (Ac 17:11). In times of doubt, especially, faith does not rest until it has found a firm footing in God's own infallible Word. Whoever knows Walther's development in his enormous spiritual struggles, whoever has himself sat at his feet and knows his theological method from personal observation, knows it is a despicable criticism that Walther was a thoughtless copier of Luther and the theology of the 16th century. Without fear of contradiction we say that there has been hardly anyone since Chemnitz with a better knowledge of Luther's theology than Walther. He did not copy Luther's theology, however, because it was Luther's, but because it was Paul's. Walther stood so unshakably on Luther's side because his mind and heart were certain from Scripture that Luther's doctrine was God's Word.^x

Luther wrote the heart and core of his theology unmistakably into the German Bible—Romans 3:28. Everyone knows why from his *Letter on Translating*.^{xi} In the central doctrine of Scripture, the justification of sinners, Walther was above all not just a true "parrot" of Luther, but he also presented Luther's doctrine in as exact, clear and graphic a way as can be found in no other theological literature since Luther. He not only excluded entirely any and all synergism but put to the lips of someone who was thirsting for grace the cup of divine comfort and actually compelled him to drink. What it means to become a partaker of the righteousness of God offered in Christ, our mercy seat, through faith alone by grace, through Christ's redemption, without merit, without the works of the law, scarcely anyone since Luther has taught more clearly and invitingly than Walther. He not merely taught but preached this directly into the hearts of people in general as well as his theological students.

Many a student who had for years heard the preaching of justification through faith alone and in spite of this had not found peace for his sin-burdened conscience attended Walther's Luther hour. When he heard from Walther that on the basis of Christ's redemption, on the basis of the expressions "as a gift" and "without works," on the basis of Christ's being presented in the Word as a "mercy seat" (Rom 3:25), in spite of all his sins he not only could but should believe, yes, had to believe if he did not want to make God a liar in regard to grace; when he heard that there was no reason in heaven or on earth or in hell why even the worst and most hard-boiled sinner, even Cain and Judas, could not and should not believe, then heaven opened up for him.

How did this come about? Walther confesses that he first became fully clear on the doctrine of justification through Luther's writings on the Keys. From these writings in particular he had recognized the *objective character of God's act of justification*. He realized that it is independent of our faith, as Paul says in Romans 4:5, "God who justifies the wicked."

Best known in this connection is his sermon on the second day of Easter: "The resurrection of Christ from the dead is the actual absolution of the entire world of sinners." He developed this theme by showing 1) that this is what it really is; and 2) that nothing is left for a sinner therefore but simply to embrace in faith this absolution which has actually taken place.

In contrast to the justification scheme of the later dogmatians, Walther taught, not a justifying act of God *intuitu fidei* [in view of faith], but rather a *fides intuitu actus justificationis Dei* [faith in view of God's act of justification]. God's act of justification precedes faith. It is not that the sinner must first believe and then God pronounces absolution on him, but first God absolves him, has actually absolved him, and that is what the sinner is to believe. In this connection Walther repeatedly cited Luther's example of a royal castle which was actually bestowed on a beggar, whether he accepted it or not. God absolves the ungodly *before* he believes, and faith embraces God's *actually completed* absolution. Only in this way is faith merely the means of receiving and appropriating justifying grace. As soon as one places faith before God's act of justification, faith becomes the motivating cause of justification; it becomes a work. Such a presentation has the effect of hindering the fearful sinner from taking hold, from believing, since he must always ask himself whether he really believes or whether his faith is of the right kind so as to move God to absolve him.

The resuscitation of Christ was for Walther the great, universal, factual absolution of all sinners, which remains a reality for every sinner in the world even if no one believes it and benefits from it.

But also the *personal absolution* pronounced on the individual sinner is an objective act of God, which takes place here on earth, not in heaven. It takes place without regard to faith through the external Word of the gospel, through the formally or informally pronounced absolution, through baptism and through Holy Communion. Word and sacrament are always and everywhere an *actual*, valid absolution, even if the absolution is not always *effective*. God deals with us through no other means. Faith is not a condition of God's act of justification, but a condition of its *taking effect*, of benefiting from God's actually completed act of absolution. And only in so far as one speaks of the *results* of the act of justification for a sinner, of his actual transfer from the condition of being without grace into the state of grace, can one with Scripture put faith before justification and call it a condition or cause or basis of justification. But then one must make clear that one is no longer speaking about God's *act* of justification, but of its intended *effect* on people.

It is, therefore, his strong *emphasis on the objective character of God's act of justification* which is the distinctive feature of Walther's way of teaching. It permeates everything he said and wrote in his teaching, yes, gives it its specific stamp. For this writer, a Luther hour in which Walther explained the announcement of the Christmas angel in this sense remains unforgettable. He told about a spiritually troubled old woman who came to joyful faith when he explained this to her. In conclusion he added that the entire gospel can be summed up in the one word the Savior spoke to the paralyzed man, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven" (Mt 9:2). This, he said, is the *joyful message* with which the risen Lord sent his disciples into the world when he gave them the commission, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." The gospel is God's absolution presented without conditions to every sinner who hears it. When Walther said this, it seemed as though the Spirit of God was moving through the large hall, and the eyes of many lighted up with joy.

Make no mistake. *The secret of Walther's power lay in his clear, popular, joyful and convincing presentation of objective justification.* That was also Luther's power, Paul's power, the power of the gospel itself, the power of God which creates faith unto salvation. On this point the division occurs between true gospel and false gospel, pure doctrine and false doctrine, faith in grace and work righteousness, Christian brotherhood and unionism, the Spirit's work in bringing about conversion and sanctification and human efforts at godliness and mere outward religiosity, genuine and counterfeit Christianity.

Walther's students and hearers have well expressed Walther's power of attraction with the statement: Walther knew how to make his hearers sure of grace. That is entirely correct. The reason for this was his emphasis on the objective character of God's act of justification, which he had drawn from Luther's writings on the infallibility of the power of the Keys.^{xii} Walther was a true disciple of Luther in the doctrine of the total human corruption through original sin and in preaching the damnableness before God of all human virtue and all human conduct. Like Luther, he proclaimed the wrath of God over all of natural man's own reasoning and reflecting as an inescapable fact of every human being. So also, like Luther, he preached to every sinner—not merely to the believing—God's *free, unconditional, complete grace and forgiveness in Christ.*

That is Walther's most distinctive characteristic. In that lay his significance, his power and his wonderful success. Not that Walther is the only one since Luther who preached this. God's objective act of justification is found in a clear form in Chemnitz, Aegidius Hunnius, Hutter, Gerhard and Calov and will probably continue in this or that teacher all through the centuries. Even Philippi teaches it. But for no teacher did it govern and shape dogmatics and preaching, public discussion and pastoral care in the same measure as for Walther.

It met with contradiction in America only twice. The last time was on the part of a young man who was still somewhat inexperienced in the teaching and history of Lutheran dogmatics.^{xiii} Even the instigator of the election controversy still gave his assent to it in the words, "if one understands it correctly."^{xiv} But how little it had entered into the flesh and blood of the church which calls itself Lutheran here in the United States was revealed by the conflict concerning election and conversion. *Intuitu fidei* was injected into the doctrine of justification, and from this the conclusion was drawn that it has a place also in election. Not one of Walther's opponents in the election controversy and few among us recognized or recognize today that *intuitu fidei* is a

purely legalistic, not an evangelical expression, which totally nullifies grace. The election controversy would have been impossible if the doctrine of justification had been understood. Luther is right in his statement that the article of justification, when it is correctly understood, keeps all other articles pure, and that no article will remain pure if this one is blurred.

We should now like to call attention to yet another point in this connection. After Stephan's removal, Walther immediately became the leader of his circle and remained that until his end, even after it expanded into the Synodical Conference, in spite of the fact that some of the men who gathered around him were intellectually outstanding. Walther proved himself to be superior also to his opponents. That was not, however, because Walther was more gifted in every respect than any of his friends or foes. There were many who excelled him in one respect or another. None of them, however, had the gift of leadership in ecclesiastical matters in the same measure as Walther. None had his outstanding ability to teach and his practical energy. Not a single one of his friends or opponents was even remotely equal to him in this.

Fuerbringer was much better trained in abstract thinking than Walther. He was the one among his friends who argued the most with him and gave him the most trouble about his abstract generalities and far-fetched arguments. But Fuerbringer did not get very far just because of his abstract way of thinking, speaking and writing. He talked over people's heads and wearied his hearers and readers with his very first sentences. One need read only a single article of his to see that, in spite of his outstanding ability to reason, he was not cut out to be a leader.^{xv} In the church everything finally comes down to one point: What does the clear Scripture say?

Keyl, Buerger, Loeber and Brohm were, each in his own way, capable, faithful, quiet people, but without fire and the ability to govern. Buenger had a heart full of love, but he was disorganized and unable to put his thoughts together. Wyneken, who was an outsider, was a sincere, true-hearted man. He was always ready to expend himself and was a popular preacher with a practical insight into life. But he lacked a scholarly background in theology. Sihler and Craemer both had a moral rigor toward themselves and others. Both were sincere, faithful and capable in their posts. The latter was a model ecclesiastical drill sergeant. Both had a legalistic streak, and neither had the gifts to be a leader in the church. Roebbelen, who was a thoroughgoing scholar and an eloquent preacher, died an early death that all too soon deprived Walther of his assistance. Later Stoeckhardt, a capable linguist, a deep spiritual thinker, a thorough exegete and a Christian of great sincerity who struck a noble, moderate tone in battle, joined him. But Stoeckhardt lacked the practical gifts needed for leadership.

Walther was the man above all his co-workers who surveyed and correctly understood the entire situation in the church of his time, saw exactly what was necessary and with all energy resolutely exercised his influence on the situation with the proper means. And his great principal means was *teaching*. His gift for teaching and his teaching activities were altogether extraordinary. He was nothing less than a thundering Jupiter. He mastered the entire realm of theology, and especially of dogmatics, as none of his American contemporaries did. There was hardly anyone in Germany either who had as thorough a knowledge of Lutheran dogmatics as he did. He could always draw on his resources and meet every objection and aberration. In his case nothing, nothing at all, was hazy, vague or poorly thought out. His language was simple, lofty and classical in style. His thoughts were always clear, vivid, logically organized and powerfully persuasive. His whole heart was always in every matter he took a hand in. He captured his hearers' interest with his opening words and held it to the very end. Intellectually, he was the master of his subject. God's Word made him certain of it. He lived it with all his soul and set aside all personal interests of his own. Preaching the law with unmitigated severity and grace in all its fullness, he spoke with eloquent boldness and captured the hearts and minds of his listeners and readers.

Walther stressed doctrine, doctrine, doctrine—somewhat onesidedly, one will have to admit. He was a dogmatician. He paid very little attention to the historical-biblical conception of the gospel. But more on this later. *Der Lutheraner* from its first issue until the end of Walther's sole editorship, the synodical reports and *Lehre und Wehre* down into the 20th century are storehouses of doctrine the like of which no other literature of the church can offer. There is scarcely an article of Scripture which Walther did not thoroughly treat and write

about at some place and time. Again and again he stressed the need for every teacher of the church to be able to repeat with Paul the words of Acts 20:20, 26, 27 that he had proclaimed the whole counsel of God to his hearers.

The result of this has been that since the time of Paul there has perhaps been no large church body to which 1 Corinthians 1:5ff has been applicable in such rich measure as to the Missouri Synod. Doctrine is what Walther emphasized, and Missouri's pastors and teachers did the same. Doctrine is what Missouri congregation members heard, and many lay people in Missouri gained a knowledge of doctrine which became a threat to unclear, uncertain or erring pastors. If pastors and lay people had not had this good understanding of doctrine, the Missouri Synod would hardly have remained united and solidly in support of Walther in the election controversy. Many members in the congregations of St. Louis especially, which were largely led by Walther personally, had such a profound understanding of the doctrines of Scripture that they were not only able to recognize and refute the errors of the sects, the falseness of all unionism and the deceptions of the unbelief which surrounded them in such a variety of forms, but they also faithfully supported their pastors in every case of church discipline that became necessary.

Luther had not been able to establish a well-instructed congregation which was able to govern itself and carry out discipline in doctrine and life according to God's Word. Walther made this a reality however, especially in St. Louis and to a lesser degree throughout the entire Missouri Synod. He was the only one to do so since the fifth century. It was a fruit of his incessant emphasis on doctrine. Personally, above all, and then also through his co-workers and students as well as through his writings, Walther saturated the whole Missouri Synod with a comprehensive knowledge of Christian doctrine. In that way he trained a group of Christians who were wonderfully united in faith, active in church and charitable undertakings and conscientious in discipline.

In the judgment of the writer of these lines, these are the main elements of the tremendous spiritual blessing which our gracious God poured out on the American Lutheran church through Walther and his co-workers. With this we must let the matter rest.

We still need to point out, however, the deficiencies in Walther's work. We dare not close our eyes to them if we don't want to fall into the sin into which, not Walther, but his companions fell in regard to Stephan. God refuses to give *his* honor to anyone else.

We observed earlier that it is God's way in certain periods of decline to raise his church up through *one* great man. But it is also a curse inherent in human weakness and sinfulness, which clings to the heels of great men, that they try too hard to create a following and are unthinkingly and uncritically accepted and idolized by many. It is so easy for the many who are too lazy to think to attach themselves to a triumphant leader and let him do the fighting on his own. That, then, when it comes to opposing others, leads to a Corinthian party spirit, which always *a priori* considers the leader right and the opponents wrong. Great men exhaust the thoughts of their time and give their followers no opportunity to think for themselves. These are then doomed to do nothing but repeat what their leader has said. Only with wrong ideas and doctrines can one achieve any significance alongside and after a person with a great, perceptive mind. So it was after Luther, and so it was in the case of Walther. All who want to continue faithfully in the path of divine truth, therefore, are threatened by the danger of becoming petty officers and foot soldiers under their great leader. We dare not forget that leaders in the church were also men who were fallible, capable of error and sinners, and that they remained this until death.

Did not Walther promote some untenable doctrines? What about his teaching in regard to usury, dancing and going to the theater, life insurance, running a tavern, in-law marriage, geographical parish boundaries, the local congregation and the pastoral office? Does not everyone know that in the doctrine of election Walther went too far in certain expressions?

As to the first four or five points mentioned, the traditional opponents of Walther and the Missouri Synod still point today with malicious joy and derision to these things as "proofs" of his claim to "orthodoxy," as though one needs only to mention them in order to stigmatize Walther as a false teacher in these matters. Walther's doctrine of usury is nothing else than the doctrine Luther preached with great certainty and emphasis. One must be just as superficial and morally obtuse as Walther's opponents of that time, however, if, in a proper examination of Walther's doctrine and of the frivolous attempts to refute it, one does not come to realize not

only that Walther's doctrine is the clear doctrine of Scripture, but also that every heathen conscience that is still somewhat sensitive must involuntarily agree with it.

Walther did not err in his teaching about usury, and he never and nowhere retracted it. His doctrine is the doctrine of Holy Scripture and of all morality. Walther did not give it up, but he found it necessary to give up on carrying it out practically in church discipline because the moral conscience of Christians, dulled by the godless world's universal practice of usury in all phases of business, could no longer be awakened on this point. Walther's doctrine of usury was not false. His mistake lay in its application. He did not see clearly that a Christian, when loaning money, can make use of the customary form of an unconditional unilateral contract without adopting its wrong intent.

The same point was also his mistake in all the other moral doctrines mentioned. He took dancing and the theater in their actual present form and condemned them as things which serve to gratify the lust of the flesh, and he warned young people especially against them. In doing this he was a thousand times right. Walther never denied in serious debate, however, that also a Christian could, under certain circumstances, dance certain kinds of dance with a stranger of the opposite sex without arousing sexual desire and therefore without sin. He never denied that one could go to see a morally clean play or sometimes also attend an ordinary production that is not entirely without fault in order to make a judgment of the stage. But he was afraid to *emphasize* this publicly because of his concern that this might lead to a misuse of Christian liberty and offense to the weak.

Nevertheless, Walther's way of presenting these matters was a mistake which finally had the opposite effect from what it should have had. In Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 Paul speaks differently about the use of moral adiaphora. First he puts the emphasis on Christian liberty. Then he talks about refraining from the use of it. "Everything is permissible for me—but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me—but I will not be mastered by anything" (1 Cor 6:12; cf also 10:23). Walther's manner and method of presenting these things went too strictly by their outward form and did not lead Christians out of their spiritual immaturity. This is true *mutatis mutandis* also in regard to life insurance and going to a tavern. It is not necessary to go into this any further.

No one, to our knowledge, has as yet demonstrated that Walther's doctrine of in-law marriage, which he took from Luther and the later dogmaticians, is false. This writer regards his argumentation, which was the dogmaticians', as invalid. He based his argument on the fact that the degree of relationship is the same as in the forbidden marriage with a brother's widow. (Verse 18 of the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus does not treat of a deceased wife's sister.) Neither does this writer consider the practice Walther recommended to be correct. But we are still waiting for the person who can prove that marriage with a deceased wife's sister is a matter of Christian liberty. This writer has tried since the days of his youth to become somewhat familiar with Hebrew grammar, and during the 43 years of his ministry he has tried to acquire an understanding of the Hebrew Old Testament. Nevertheless, he does not venture to express a judgment on the legitimacy or illegitimacy of such a marriage. (Verse 16 is, of course, absolutely clear!)

It may sound disrespectful, but neither in the dogmaticians nor in Walther can the author of this article discover a scriptural basis binding on one's conscience for prohibiting such a marriage and for the practice based on such grounds. With regard to the doctrine of this marriage, he so far finds only a non liquet [it is not clear]; and with regard to the practice, he can find no requirement that couples who have been turned away and then been married elsewhere repent. This writer holds that, on the one hand, a pastor ought to refuse to perform a marriage ceremony for couples when an in-law relationship is involved because of the uncertainty about the legitimacy of such a marriage. Such a refusal must at the same time be accompanied by an earnest warning to the parties involved. On the other hand, consciences must not be burdened, that is, there should be no demand for repentance. This is not the place to go into the matter itself.^{xvi}

That Walther went too far in his demand for the recognition of a *quasi* divine right in the geographical boundaries of parishes he himself finally admitted in response to the protest of President Lehmann.^{xvii}

In the doctrine of the church and its ministry and of the proper form of a Lutheran congregation, Walther's two books have become basic and normative for the view held in the entire Synodical Conference and beyond it. This has, however, not been universally true as far as his definition of a Lutheran local

congregation is concerned.^{xviii} There have been deviations because, in spite of what Walther said, the condition of being under a pastor has always been immediately included. Walther, of course, clearly enough tied the ministry of the Keys to the communion of saints alone and tied its discernability to the administration of the Word and sacraments alone. This misunderstanding was occasioned in part by the fact that in his book *Church and Ministry* Walther uses terms commonly used in Germany.^{xix} He uses *public ministry* [*Predigtamt*, literally, preaching office] and *pastoral ministry* [*Pfarramt*, literally, parish office] synonymously. In doing that, he seems to claim that only the pastoral ministry was divinely instituted. That he did not want to deny the divine institution of all other forms of the public ministry, that he considered a professorship at a Christian college also to be a species of the general public ministry instituted by God, he clearly attested in his sermon at the installation of a Fort Wayne professor. Nevertheless, his presentation in *Church and Ministry* and elsewhere gave people who did not examine the matter more carefully the impression that only the local congregational or parochial public ministry, the parish ministry form, has been instituted by God, whereas all other forms of the public ministry, even the office of a theological professor, are a human arrangement.^{xx} That Luther considered not only the pastoral office form of the public ministry as divinely instituted but all possible forms such as “pastoral office, teacher, preacher, reader, priest (as chaplains are called), sexton, schoolmaster and whatever else belongs to such offices and persons,” the entire “spiritual estate,” “which has the ministry and the service of the word and sacraments,” is clearly seen from his own words in the sermon of 1530 on the education of children, which Walther himself cites in his book under the second thesis on “the public ministry or pastoral ministry [*Predigtamt oder Pfarramt*].” In the *Quartalschrift* we have previously established this in detail also from his other writings.

Concerning his so-called erroneous expressions in the doctrine of election, Walther, as everyone knows, wrote an article under the title “*Linguam corrigat, sententiam teneat!* [Correct the language, retain the thought]” in *Lehre und Wehre*.^{xxi} He wrote it in particular at the suggestion of the prudent Hoenecke in order to deprive his opponents of the opportunity for fruitless controversy and to remove every occasion for offense on the part of the weak among his friends. But the man is yet to be born who can prove that even one of the expressions Walther there dropped is contrary to Scripture when used in the sense he intended.

Except for the last point, all that has previously been mentioned can be traced to a twofold common source. Walther had a conscience that was thoroughly steeped in God’s Word and unusually sensitive and strict. He had only one fear—that of doing and teaching something contrary to God’s Word. But his spiritual awakening in his student days had been strongly pietistic. In the early days of his ministry, his reading consisted largely of pietistic Bible expositions and pietistic devotional and homiletic literature. He considered Fresenius to be the model preacher, even as to form.^{xxii} To recognize his pietistic bent one needs only to look at a series of his sermons in his *Evangelienpostille* and to note how he divides his hearers into classes and makes a special application for each one. To the end of his life he did not entirely free himself of this.

All Pietism, having a legalistic character, strongly overemphasizes externals, forms and what is mechanical. The outward form determines what is pious and what is ungodly. Even accepting or participating in the world’s outward forms of life puts a person on a level with the world. Therefore, dancing, playing cards, the theater, life insurance, accepting interest and the like, as forms in which the children of this world live their life, are eo ipso sin for Christians. Pietism recognizes no moral adiaphora. The same basic viewpoint was the source also of Walther’s insistence on the geographical boundaries of parishes, his unintentional elevation of the pastoral office over other forms of the ministry and of the congregational form over other forms of the church.

The other source of his *naevi* [faults] was his dependence on the secondary sources of theology—Luther and lesser fathers. This cannot be denied in spite of all his emphasis on Scripture. Not to admit this is either blindness or untruthfulness. As brilliant a dogmatician as Walther was, he was also an inferior exegete. His knowledge of the original biblical languages was good, but not outstanding. He took over dozens of proof passages from Luther and the dogmaticians which do not prove what they were supposed to prove. He failed to recognize that he was basing his position on translations and not on the original text. Thus, for example, he believed in the *semper virgo*, as he confessed at the Milwaukee colloquy with the Iowans, but without a firm scriptural basis. On the whole, his knowledge of Scripture was more an intimate acquaintance with Luther’s

Bible and a knowledge of passages than a knowledge of the whole line of thought of a biblical book and of the original text.

With the exception of a number of passages of the original text, Walther stood *de facto* on Scripture—but not directly as Luther did, but often in and through and with Luther. The Holy Spirit bore witness to him through Luther that in its content Luther’s doctrine was God’s Word, and he found it to be so through his own study of Scripture without, for example, checking and recognizing Luther’s errors in translation and exegesis in many individual passages.

In order to evaluate correctly Walther’s inner stance toward Luther and his stand on Scripture, one should read, for example, his classic forewords to the fifth and sixth volumes of *Der Lutheraner*.^{xxiii} He sees Luther as the God-given Reformer of the church, and he is certain that Luther’s doctrine is the eternal gospel. “Luther based all his doctrines so clearly and openly on holy Scripture that a Christian conscience is brought to a solid, certain, divine foundation for its faith *through him*.”^{xxiv} In this way Walther with a perfect right defends himself against the criticism that he idolizes Luther. He “does not believe one word of his in matters of faith because *he* said it, but rather because he proves everything so beautifully from God’s Word.”^{xxv}

Nevertheless, he leans more heavily on Luther and his faithful followers than he himself admits. His entire way of doing theology proves this. All his doctrinal books, papers and essays show this characteristic. It is evident already in *Church and Ministry*: thesis, proof from God’s Word (which occasionally follows Luther also in an incorrect translation or is somewhat far-fetched), testimony from the official church Confessions, testimonies from the fathers. *The Proper Form* begins right after the thesis with the Confessions. His dogmatics textbook consists entirely of material taken over from others—which is, after all, much more difficult work than if he had written everything on his own. His *Pastoral Theology* also does this to a great extent. All his articles, and particularly his polemical articles, teem with quotations from Luther and the dogmaticians.

This method was, to be sure, justified in the period that was searching for true Lutheranism, and it corresponded fully also with Walther’s spiritual development. Another reason for it was his great modesty and his lively awareness of his inability when he compared himself with Luther and Chemnitz, Gerhard and Calov, and by his pious fear of going astray in even the smallest point of doctrine. He confesses that he produced absolutely nothing of his own, that he only “stammeringly repeated” Luther as his most insignificant student. The man was so uncommonly sincere and truthful with Wyneken and all his early co-workers. He was in no way one of those seemingly strong personalities who on the basis of a partial knowledge assume a boldness and assurance they don’t have.

Nevertheless, Walther’s method, however justified it may have been in the beginning, was in principle and practice wrong. It did not rest *directly* on Scripture and did not lead one directly into it—something which Luther with all his writing wanted to bring about. This method did no harm to the correct doctrine of Walther and his students, since Luther’s doctrine is nothing but God’s Word. But it stressed too strongly the importance of Luther and the Lutheran Confessions and the Lutheran fathers in comparison with Scripture. This caused people to think that the point that was presented or discussed was sufficiently established by the quotations from Luther and the fathers without a study of Scripture itself. It kept people from studying Scripture. It even led to this that later one did not stop with quoting Luther and the old fathers, but now one also quoted Walther and other celebrities for proof of the correct doctrine. The subject of study for new essays became not so much Scripture as the essays in the old synodical reports, and quotations from them were frequently used instead of proof from Scripture.

The citation theology which thus became fashionable in the case of many a student outdid the master and produced a theology of the fathers which came home with a vengeance in the election controversy. The opponents of Walther and his faithful students and followers made a flank attack on them with the fathers and forced them to take a defensive position. Then the attempt was made to use the “principal fathers,” Luther and the theologians of the 16th century, against the [later] “fathers.” This continued until Stoeckhardt, the exegete who had just come from Germany, and other younger theologians who were thoroughly trained in the language of the New Testament—some of whom also came from abroad—broke through Walther’s “father theology” in principle and practice and by means of Scripture won the victory for what was right.

Walther's program of studies at the seminary for the training of pastors was in line with his teaching method, which has been described. Personally, Walther was a teacher of God's grace the like of which appears in the Christian church only once every 500 years. But what he accomplished he achieved through his clear, heartwarming, divinely powerful testimony and through his sanctified personality, not through a mastery and application of pedagogical principles.

It was self-evident that he was made the head of the seminary, which was also in part an academic institution. But he was not always fortunate in the choice of his colleagues, and to some extent the choice was not his to make. But even the men who were otherwise dependable had little influence, of course, in comparison with Walther. Walther was the faculty. Practically, then, it made little difference that almost all the necessary theological subjects which are customary at a university were represented in the seminary curriculum.

Walther, naturally, was the teacher of dogmatics, which was regarded as the queen of theological disciplines. He also taught pastoral theology. The special emphasis put on pure doctrine, which had now become a synodical emphasis, and the towering personality of Walther together with the impractical arrangement of the other subjects inevitably led to the result that only dogmatics and pastoral theology were actually studied and little or nothing was learned in the other subjects.

A teacher can expect even less independent study from American students than from others. Americans want to get into action in practical life as quickly as possible and get something done. They think they can do this even without first beating out their brains on theoretical and technical things. Unless one applies pedagogical pressure, the student learns little. If he has at least learned the most necessary procedures, however, he later becomes a satisfactory practitioner through experience.

The average student in Walther's time made out poorly, therefore, in everything except dogmatics and pastoral theology. In the first year, as the elderly Craemer used to put it bluntly, the professors had enough to do to "drive the devil" out of the new students. That was not meant quite so bad as it sounds.

But the difficulties in training capable pastors were in fact considerable. Students entering the seminary across the board lacked the educational background which is indispensable for theological study. A series of circumstances that came together was responsible for this. On the one hand, the students crammed into the preparatory schools were not mentally honed.^{xxvi} On the other hand, there was an almost complete lack of professionally trained teachers who were Christians matured through experience. And last but not least, there was the urgent demand of the time that as many pastors as possible be placed into the field in the shortest possible time. This reduced the time spent on the preparatory level to six years and allowed only three years for theological study.

The last need resulted also in the purely practical training of pastors which was carried on at first by Sihler and Craemer in Fort Wayne. Then, from 1860 to 1875, it was combined with the "theoretical" seminary in St. Louis and later continued on a separate basis again in Springfield. All these things, taken together with what was previously mentioned, prevented that kind of careful, thorough and special preparation which is necessary for deep and wide-ranging theological study.

When one considers all these difficulties, the results achieved in so short a time are astonishing. Nevertheless, the deficiency in the quality of preparation given theological students produced a great many of those flaws which led to the problems we are now experiencing. To this inferiority in preparatory training was added in the seminary a theoretical and practical one-sided stress on dogmatics and a corresponding neglect of instruction in history and exegesis.

New Testament exegesis consisted mainly of dictated quotations from the Lutheran exegetes of the 16th and 17th centuries. Old Testament exegesis involved translation and quotations. When the writer of this article was in the seminary from 1876 to 1879, hermeneutics was taught by Walther himself in the first (!) year according to the *Latin* textbook of 1754 by the old Dr. C. G. Hofmann! Beyond that, the course included cursory reading of a Gospel in German. The assignment given was to find the meaning of every verse or make an application of it. The students in their fun called that *porismata pullen*.^{xxvii}

In isagogics the Bible itself was seldom used in class. Actually, then, the students came out of the seminary without having the slightest ability in exegesis. In fact, they had not even studied a single book of

Holy Scripture somewhat thoroughly. Relatively speaking, with the exception of dogmatics and pastoral theology, they got the most out of the instruction in history. This was given on the basis of the abstract textbook of Guericke, who constructed periods of history that nobody could follow and who was completely indigestible for students who had so little mental preparation in their previous schooling. The teacher at least gave us in addition his own church history tables, which were more practical than Guericke's chronological tables.

The extremely lifeless reading of the Symbolical Books was auxiliary to the instruction in dogmatics. It was dogmatics, with five to seven periods a week, that in the second and third years of study claimed all the energy even of the diligent students. The pedantry of using a Latin textbook and Latin as the language of instruction together with Latin dictation from the Lutheran church fathers made the study of dogmatics so difficult for most students that they had to spend four, five or even six hours on it every day in order to be able to answer in Latin Walther's Latin questions and later the questions of the tutor, which were also in Latin. In the curriculum of the preparatory school, Latin was prescribed as the language of instruction for the upper class in the study of at least one or another Greek or Latin author.^{xxviii}

The use of Latin in the seminary had some uncommon advantages. With some diligence the more proficient students acquired such a good reading knowledge of church Latin that the door was opened for them to the entire Latin literature of the church. At the same time it provided training in logic that could scarcely be obtained in any other way. But especially, through this practice the students became so familiar with the dogmatics of the 16th and 17th centuries that they developed a desire to study Chemnitz, Gerhard, Calov, Quenstedt and Hollaz at some future time. They bought up all the copies of the old Lutheran classical dogmaticians and exegetes that were available in Germany. As far as most of them were concerned, little or nothing came of this later. Being overloaded as usual with the practical work of the ministry made that impossible. But the drill in dogmatics in the seminary was so thorough that only a few left the institution without knowing the smallest details of pure Lutheran doctrine.

Just these circumstances, on the other hand, led to that evil which outside the Missouri Synod has been called the "Missouri spirit." As a result of the extreme narrowness of the almost exclusively dogmatical-practical education and the exclusively practical training of a large proportion of the pastors and as a result of the consciousness of Lutheran orthodoxy and ecclesiastical proficiency which was implanted in all, it was psychologically inevitable that a bad attitude became entrenched in many in the synod. The boast is made that Missourians are the only ones who are completely orthodox and competent. Everything that does not come from Missouri is despised as *eo ipso* more or less false and worthless. This attitude is taken not only toward the synods which have remained hostile, but also toward those which in the course of time were recognized as sufficiently Lutheran.

Fortunately, this attitude is *not* found in many, and particularly not in those who are the most talented, especially those who have come from outside the synod. But it is present from top to bottom, and to a large extent it has taken hold of the lay people also. In hundreds of concrete cases, in raising suspicions about doctrine, in dead silence about and boycotting of non-synodical literature, in competition in the area of foreign church work, in a smug tone of criticism of non-synodical church institutions and theological accomplishments and in all kinds of scornful talk and remarks, this attitude confronts even the friends of Missouri again and again to the present day.

We certainly do not write this in order to cast aspersions on Missouri or because we do not know the evils that are present among us—we will later speak frankly about that also. But we say this first of all for the sake of the truth, which recognizes without envy what is good wherever it is found, but which also does not pass over in silence whatever evils are present. And as personal as many a judgment in this article may seem to be, in this point we are merely expressing the conviction of all non-Missouri Lutheran Christians. And love requires it, love which seeks the welfare of the whole church. Admittedly, among the opponents this judgment is combined with an unchristian aversion for the "overdoing" of Missouri's confessional stance and for its "exclusiveness." But even this aversion would not be so intense if orthodoxy did not frequently appear in that dress.

This evil weighs very heavy when it is judged in the light of Scripture. It has a strong church-divisive effect. What an opportunity God is offering us today in Germany and elsewhere to serve the church again in the

recovery of true Lutheranism if we go there in humility and love without denying any truth! If humble love had always held sway, we would, humanly speaking, no longer have a loosely connected Synodical Conference today, but an even greater Missouri Synod.^{xxix} It constitutes a standing danger to the peace and unity in the spirit which exist in the Synodical Conference and which can be maintained only by mutual love. It is also a standing obstacle to true Christian union with those synods still outside the Synodical Conference in which an earnest striving for sound Lutheranism is unmistakable.

It requires a goodly measure of Christian love and patience to have to endure being looked down on by a pastor with an exclusively practical training and still work together with him in brotherly love. In reality, this attitude has produced on the opposite side an aversion and an equally unjustified pride, which thanks God for not being like those other people. We most surely have no reason to elevate ourselves above one another in view of the corruption which has invaded our entire orthodox church like a flood since Walther's death. Both sides should rather find abundant reason to repent of the evils whose inroads are largely due to our becoming worldly and to our unfaithfulness. In deep humility and heartfelt brotherly love we ought to make a fresh start.

But more will be said about that later. Here we are dealing first of all with the flaws in Walther, which the objective observer certainly can not overlook. Among these we must include, in order to be truthful, his not always purely spiritual method of doing battle. This had a contagious effect not only on his early, but also on his later, younger students and fellow combatants. To the present day it has led to polemics that are often grotesque, especially among young people.

It seems at first to be an anomaly that this man, who was so pure, so very humble, so often on his knees before his God, who so often stressed his own nothingness and unworthiness, who was so friendly and lovable in personal relations, "this fine polite Saxon," as Wyneken called him, could have fallen now and then into ugly personal polemics, which a Christian spirit immediately abhors. And yet it cannot be denied.^{xxx} Walther's polemics against the Buffalo and Iowa Synods and others is, from this angle, an unpleasant chapter, similar to Luther's. It is as though God permits such defects to cling even to his most powerful tools so that the wretchedness of all human greatness is driven home to us and so that we do not practice hero worship, something to which we are only too inclined. Least of all should we imitate the obvious mistakes of our fathers and count them as our virtues or parade them as a piece of their greatness which has been passed on to us.

Among his colleagues Walther was the only one who was independent and well versed in doctrine. He possessed a practical insight and an enormous energy, which took advantage of circumstances in a formative and creative way. Naturally, then, he became the leader in almost every area. But leading and managing are dangerous for one's own soul. They lead too easily to a desire to rule and to domineer intellectually and socially over those who think and want to do things differently.

The independent and deep thinker Fuerbringer often got into an argument with Walther and shouted at him, "You're a tyrant!" It is difficult to say today which of the two was the least or the most right. In Stephan's emigration Walther was the only one who consistently refused to pay homage to Stephan. His independence was what rescued the church. The manner and way, however, in which Walther exposed Stephan was in harmony neither with Luther's teaching about preserving the secrecy of a confession nor with that love which seeks the sinner's repentance and salvation above everything else. Such love does not make the removing of the church's shame its first concern. Neither were Walther's actions in harmony with the proper separation of temporal and ecclesiastical authority. It would have been good if Hochstetter in his history had handled the matter as discreetly as Guenther did in his biography of Walther.^{xxxi}

Paradoxically, the man who was inwardly so very deep and who discerned so clearly the purely inner nature of Christianity had a strong bent for externals. Recognizing this is also necessary for a correct evaluation of his person and an understanding of his work. The Missouri Synod has become great, not only inwardly, but also outwardly, through this characteristic of Walther's. Though he clearly recognized that the true church is something purely inward and invisible, he—more than Luther—emphasized the "true *visible* church on earth" and staked his life on making it a reality in the most perfect form possible in his synod. His splendid book *The Proper Form*, which is studied so little by our pastors, is an eloquent testimony of this.

As far as the outward form is concerned, Walther made his own St. Louis congregations true model congregations, which have been surpassed almost nowhere at any time. The constitution of the St. Louis congregations, which was drafted by Walther, has been taken over in substance by almost all Missouri and most Wisconsin Synod congregations. Walther was the man who not only forcefully taught and emphasized that congregations should practice discipline, he also made it a normal thing in the church. It is self-evident that Walther never completely realized his ideal. The “trueness” of the visible church does not consist in the perfection of its teaching and discipline, but rather in having what is essential and in striving after perfection (Php 3:12ff).

But Walther was deeply concerned also about the church’s good image and good name in the world, perhaps too much so. Think of his defense of Stephan in the public newspaper and then, after he was unmasked, of the disavowal of him published in the paper. The 28 year old young man should not be blamed too much for this action by which “the whole world” was to “find out” about Stephan’s sins. But something of this inclination showed itself in his character later also. He liked to make a bit of a show of the magnificence of his visible church. One can hardly imagine our Lord Christ or even Paul taking part in an ostentatious church celebration. Under Walther almost all church festivities (not his personal ones), dedication ceremonies, jubilees and the like had a flamboyant character. Ecclesiastical processions with banners and slogans, drums and trumpets, huge rallies preceded by glowing announcements, featuring spredeagle speeches and followed by flattering reports were not repugnant to him. The unpleasant turn this tendency later took is something we will have to come back to later. It is closely connected with a sensitivity toward all dissent and all criticism, which led in turn to an unfavorable judgment or unpleasant polemics against the critic.

Walther’s greatness is not lessened by these human failings. What he gave to the church is so immeasurably great that his mistakes are as nothing in comparison, and a thousand more could not detract from it. Our assignment is, not to regard his person as sacrosanct, but to recognize, preach and preserve his gospel and to renew and continue his influence.

We turn now to a description of the conditions in the Wisconsin Synod in its early years.

III

From the beginning the internal and external circumstances in the Wisconsin Synod were entirely different from those among the Saxons who immigrated. The Saxons were an internally homogeneous and compact group. They were bound together by conscience scruples about pure Lutheran doctrine and by their concern for freedom in their ecclesiastical organization. They had to go through unusual doctrinal struggles. At the same time they had to provide for their daily bread. Without exception the pastors and candidates of theology—and many of the lay people as well—had a thorough academic education, and some were very gifted intellectually. The same was true of those who were soon added to their number from outside their ranks. In addition, they enjoyed the leadership of Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, a dynamic and fiery man, who was exceedingly able and unusually energetic. He surpassed all the others intellectually, had good practical insight and was a person to whom the rest at once deferred.

None of these things, contrariwise, were to be found in the conglomeration of pastors who united synodically under Muehlhaeuser in Wisconsin in 1850 and under Heyer in Minnesota in 1860, as well as in the Michigan Synod. Until the 1860s they were almost entirely the products of schools for missionaries who were sent out by the various mission societies which were organized in Germany in the period of awakening. These societies were either private enterprises or projects of the various national churches with a more or less Lutheran or Union complexion.^{xxxii} These pastors were animated by a desire to gather into congregations the Germans who in a religious sense were perishing in what was then the American Northwest. But they had no clear and firm attitude toward the Confessions, and some knew nothing about sound Lutheran congregational leadership.

All three synods were initially more or less closely connected with the General Synod in the East. Most of the pastors were mildly Lutheran, some very decidedly Lutheran and a small number strongly Union minded.

What led them to form independent synods was, in addition to their mission zeal, the gross syncretism of the synods in the East, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, what seemed to them to be the exaggerated confessional strictness and unevangelical practice of the Missouri and Buffalo Synods. From the former they in time cut themselves loose. From the latter they believed they had to keep themselves separate while they were able only slowly and hesitantly to dissolve their connections with the mission societies out of which they had come and with the Lutheran and Union state churches in Germany from which they ever and again received and accepted additional pastors and financial support. Admittedly, this is true in the full sense only of Wisconsin and Minnesota; Michigan's development was unique.

We take up first of all the original Wisconsin Synod, whose distinctive characteristics became typical of the character of the joint body which was formed later. Unlike Missouri, Wisconsin was not of one mold. It was not born of one united, strong, clear Lutheran spirit. In its beginnings it was a conglomeration of people of various confessional leanings. They were to a large extent people who were not thoroughly instructed in doctrine and who were consequently unclear on doctrinal issues. In addition, they were in part strangers to each other in that they did not come from the same territory in Europe. They had no outstanding or even authoritative leader and no strong unifying force. Individuals, to be sure, labored faithfully and diligently at their post, using whatever pastoral insight they had. Many, indeed, had no idea how to organize a Lutheran congregation properly or how to exercise discipline in matters of doctrine and life. As a synod they did not really know what they were, what they wanted to be or how to go about doing something useful. There was only one thing they were sure of: they wanted synodical independence and autonomy.

This was the reason for the synodical weakness which characterized the early Wisconsin Synod in contrast to the enormous synodical energy of the Missourians. If we have not overcome that to this day, this is due to the fact that we are a conglomeration of different synods and of individual elements which are ecclesiastically similar to us but striving for the greatest possible independence. This is the specific characteristic of our historical development and growth. Even to the present day we are not yet of one unified, active synodical mold.

As a result of the original confessional diversity of the Wisconsin people and the ecclesiastical awkwardness of some, two things developed first of all: the battle between the Lutheran and Union elements within the synod about taking a clear and decisive Lutheran position, and the conflict outside the synod with the Missourians, who did not recognize us and contested the field with us everywhere. Meanwhile, the synod's work revolved around establishing a school to produce pastors and teachers. Both battles came to a happy end, but the first not without creating ill will and bitterness among the various groups within the synod and finally producing factions, the other not without causing many to have a more or less strong antipathy toward Missouri.

In establishing the synodical school, the original confessional jumble, the interweaving of ecclesiastical and personal interests on the part of the opposing groups, and the lack of direction and strength in the synodical effort were still fully in evidence. The institution was located in Watertown and not in Milwaukee because the leaders of the confessionally stricter and more numerous party lived in and near Watertown, and those of the smaller and laxer party lived in Milwaukee. The original plan was to build an institution for the training of Lutheran pastors and teachers, for which there was a crying need at the time. It ended up that a seminary with a pre-theological high school and college turned out to be a minor part of the school, which became an American college and an institution of general higher education in which practical business training played the chief role. According to the charter registered in Madison, the institution could not exclude any student "because of his particular religious views."^{xxxiii} The result of this lack of purpose was that "of the 95 students who attended the institution in the 1868–69 school year, 73 were day students from Watertown or the immediate vicinity, and most of these were of English or Irish descent."^{xxxiv}

Most glaring in the initial years was the lack of confessional and pedagogical agreement in the faculty. Pastor Adam Martin, who was a unionist and who came from the General Synod, was named president. He preferred to speak English rather than German.^{xxxv} The theological instructor was a German, Dr. Eduard Mohldehnke, a pastor. In addition, there was a layman by the name of Seemann, who religiously was noncommittal. Then at the seminary [as Mohldehnke's successor] was Hoenecke, who was both capable and

decidedly Lutheran. On the faculty also was Pastor Lewis Thompson, who had been educated at Beloit and Union Theological Seminary in New York. In the academy were John Kaltenbrunn, a Moravian, and Amos Easterday, a Lutheran from the East. As far as funds for the construction and support of the institution are concerned, only the smallest portion came from the congregations.

As early as the first years of the synod the foundation was laid for the other great evil which still gnaws at the core of our synodical life and work today: Wisconsin became all too much a synod of pastors and all too little a synod of laity. In the constitution of the Missouri Synod Walther established the principle: "No resolution of the synod is binding on individual congregations until it has been expressly approved and accepted by them." In that way he forced all synodical matters to be considered thoroughly by every congregation before they were carried out. Thus synodical business became congregational business and a concern primarily of the laity.

The pastors in the Wisconsin Synod, on the other hand, became accustomed to deliberate on and decide synodical business, often with stormy debate, in the presence of but without much active participation by congregational delegates. Neither had they previously considered it thoroughly with their congregations, and they did not even discuss it fully with them afterwards. When synodical resolutions required funds, they came to their congregations merely as collectors of money. Our school in Watertown came into existence not as a result of a decision by our congregations but as a result of deliberations and decisions by pastors. It's no wonder that the necessary money was not forthcoming from the congregations!

The synod was also suffering from megalomania. Its aim was to found a school which could compete "with the best institutions in the country" and which "would through comprehensive and thorough instruction qualify" its students "for any higher position in life."^{xxxvi} According to Martin's ideals, the intention was to establish "a college of first rank" to educate influential men for the state and the church and in this way to imprint, if possible, a Lutheran-Christian character on the life of the American people.^{xxxvii} After this had been decided virtually by the pastors themselves, little support, naturally, could later be obtained from the poor immigrant laborers and peasants who comprised the bulk of the congregations and who were concerned first of all about their earthly existence.

So the synod had to turn to the world and resort to questionable methods to carry out its project. An appeal was made to the city and the citizens of Watertown. In fact, the citizens of the entire state were solicited to procure the necessary funds.^{xxxviii} The school was built largely with American scholarships and Russian rubles. The scholarships were sold to members of the congregations and nonmembers, to Germans, the English and the Irish. By synodical resolution Bading collected funds in Europe. (The Berlin consistory held back the 7000 Prussian thalers collected by him in the Union church of Prussia because the synod had become more and more Lutheran.) Later the school experienced the greatest financial and legal difficulties because it was not in a position to honor the scholarships that had been sold and to turn into ready money those that had been given on a signature basis.

From 1868 to 1870 the institution had to fight impending bankruptcy. Things were so bad that in May 1870 President Bading wrote in the *Gemeindeblatt*: "The board of control will be compelled at the next synodical convention to ask for its dismissal and will hand over to the honorable synod the keys of the institution. But in doing so it will be obliged to declare that the undertaking failed because of the heartlessness and indifference of our own members."^{xxxix}

But the congregation members were not to blame for the fact that the congregations had this attitude toward the institution, the only larger undertaking of the synod up to this point. The fault lay rather in the synod's megalomania, in its lack of planning and purpose, in the running of things by pastors only, and in the pastors' failure to educate their congregations regarding synodical work.

That became apparent the very next year. Compelled by the desperate need, the pastors had to lay the cause of the school on the heart of their congregations. In a short time all the financial problems were solved. They reappeared, it is true, as the school experienced greater needs. The synod repeatedly fell much too deep into debt because the old evils persisted. If we learn anything at all from this, it ought to be that we will not get out of financial difficulty so long as the evils which have been mentioned are not eliminated. We are

emphatically pointing the finger at our faults, not for the sake of criticizing, but for the sake of improvement. We will have something to say also about that which is very commendable.

The synod became clear and firm in its doctrinal position in the midst of the Watertown problems. In 1867 the synod cut itself loose from the mission societies and state churches in Germany. In 1868 Missouri and Wisconsin mutually recognized one another as orthodox, halted hostilities and ecclesiastical competition, and sought and found ways to work together. Muehlhaeuser had died, Vorberg had left, and others inclined to be friendly to the Union church in Germany were won over.

The chief champions of strict Lutheran doctrine and practice were first of all Philipp Koehler and then Adolf Hoenecke, who immigrated in 1863. Hoenecke soon became the intellectual leader of the synod and remained that until his death in 1908. As a student of Tholuck, Hoenecke came to know the truth and was won for service in the church through personal association with him. The writer of these lines does not know who really led him to his strict Lutheran position; perhaps it was Guericke, who was teaching at Halle at the same time as Tholuck. At any rate, he was not attracted at first to Guericke; and he had an immediate dislike for the rationalist Hupfeldt, who was constantly riding his newly constructed hobby-horse regarding the Pentateuch. Hoenecke's conversion was thorough. There was therefore hardly anything that he, a man of the keenest understanding, hated and fought against more than Pietism, Rationalism and unionism, even though he grew up and was trained in Rationalism and was in spirit a Berliner.

Hoenecke did not have the inner fire, the outward energy or the practical gift for organization that Walther had. Because of his unusually perceptive understanding and his thorough academic and theological education, his chief characteristics were a clear and sure judgment, good sense, prudence, moderation and firmness. He had a cool nature and was affectionate only toward intimate friends. He persuaded and convinced people without attracting them personally or inspiring them greatly. But his utter seriousness, genuine fear of God, firm stand on Scripture, sound Lutheranism, superior mind, theological perception and depth, and skill in debate were decisive in gaining the victory for strict Lutheranism in the Wisconsin Synod.

Hoenecke put his personal stamp directly on the Wisconsin Synod in yet another respect. In contrast to Walther, he attached little importance to outward forms, pomp and greatness, both personally and in the church. He was fundamentally averse to all mere show, parading and demonstrating. Even outward church discipline in matters of doctrine and life meant nothing to him if it did not come from within. He wanted to work solely on people's hearts, persuading, winning and edifying them through God's Word, through the gospel, without using any outward force. He was, therefore, a thoroughly evangelical man, who did not seek to shape outward things according to his own human ideas by doing intellectual violence to others. Rather, he let things develop as God's Spirit and circumstances or even the movers and shakers in the church shaped them. This characteristic and this way of working on the part of Hoenecke contributed much to the development of church life in the Wisconsin Synod. There is nothing outwardly showy here.

After the synod, through Hoenecke's influence above all, had become soundly Lutheran, it continued to grow by adding many pastors from the outside. The diversity of its elements did not cease; it increased. These men came to us, if not because of doctrinal opposition to Missouri, nevertheless because of a deep inner antagonism toward it. At the same time the theological students who had been trained in St. Louis and who had strong leanings toward Missouri became an integrating influence in the synod. In addition to the previous personal circles, new ones developed, which became ecclesiastical-political parties.

The Minnesota Synod meanwhile had become confessionally clear and joined Missouri and Wisconsin in the Synodical Conference. The formation of this body immediately gave a strong impetus to the idea of reorganizing the set-up in the orthodox church. The large and energetic Missouri Synod urged closer union, immediately if possible, or at least a gradual complete amalgamation into one body with a single ecclesiastical administration. It urged first of all that a joint seminary be established, which Walther intended to develop gradually into a Lutheran university. It wanted the general synod to be divided into local state synods. For Wisconsin and Minnesota that naturally meant giving up their independence and being absorbed by the Missouri Synod.

Now some ecclesiastical-political maneuvering for and against the project began, which once again disturbed the unity in Wisconsin and led, on the one hand, to a rejection of Walther's plans and, on the other hand, to a closer union with Minnesota, and later with the Michigan Synod. It did not, however, do away with the personal antagonism which had arisen between the parties. Neither did it fully overcome the push for independence on the part of the individual synods that were combining into one joint body.

Hoenecke, who long before had become the most important scholar in Wisconsin and its theological leader, did not become a party leader. He was, rather, the conservative scholarly moderator through whom synodical life again gained spiritual stability. He was not enthusiastic about Missouri's plans, which aimed at building something outwardly imposing. In the course of time he had acquired a certain inner dislike for the method and manner of certain prominent people in Missouri—but never for Walther himself, of whom he had a very high opinion. He felt that it was better that Wisconsin carry on its own work according to its own inclinations in peace with Missouri. Synodical greatness, influence and glory meant nothing to him. As he saw it, the well-being of the church depended on the pastors' being orthodox at heart and true believers. He expected no special benefit from the new union with Minnesota nor with Michigan either, and kept himself distant from all synodical and intersynodical machinations. Personal intrigues were abhorrent to him.

The seminary was discontinued when the arrangements previously made in Watertown broke down and an understanding was reached with Missouri. An agreement was made between the two synods that Missouri would place and support a professor in Watertown and Wisconsin one in St. Louis. Both synods were to enjoy equal rights in the use of both institutions for their students. Hoenecke was to be sent to St. Louis. When he, however, received a call to St. Matthew congregation in Milwaukee, he accepted it. He felt, on the one hand, that his working together with Walther might be a threat to peace in the church. On the other hand, the Wisconsin Synod was almost bankrupt and did not venture to raise money for the professorship in St. Louis while the school in Watertown was in dire financial straits.

The Missourians carried out their part of the agreement. They sent to Watertown Professor F. W. Stellhorn and many of their college students who came from the Northwest. Under Professor August F. Ernst, newly called from the East, the college was transformed into a classical German *gymnasium*, or secondary school, although the English business department was retained. In spite of the fact that Wisconsin did not keep its part of the agreement, its theological students were hospitably received for ten years in St. Louis. They brought with them into the Wisconsin Synod a large measure of Walther's theology and spirit and a friendship for Missouri.

Theodore Jaeckel was called to take Muehlhaeuser's place at Grace church in Milwaukee, and Bading was called from St. Mark in Watertown to the Dulitz-Streissguth St. John congregation, which was also in Milwaukee. When Hoenecke stepped into Vorberg's place at St. Matthew, the spiritual center of the synod shifted from Watertown to Milwaukee. All three men were able preachers and each in his own way a man of talent.

Jaeckel was a quiet man, keeping to himself and not very sociable. As secretary of the synod, he kept the minutes with remarkable skill and conscientiously administered almost all its funds. Because the coffers were poorly filled, he often encouraged and pressed for more diligence in collecting funds, mostly without much success, since neither the pastors nor the congregations at this time had a strong synodical spirit. When he felt things were getting too bad, he got rough. At other times he thought everything was fine, even though the financial problems continued as before. While he personally lived modestly and kept to himself—he had a close association only with Hoenecke and Bading—at heart he was deeply attached to the synod. After he and his wife died, the synod found it had been endowed with the largest portion of his wife's inherited fortune. Grace school received the remainder of the estate. But his influence on the spirit of the synod was slight.

Bading was different. Like Muehlhaeuser and most of the original Wisconsin men, he was the product of a school for missionaries. He was not burdened with learning and had no particularly deep emotions. But he was a sincere Christian and a true Lutheran. He was a clear thinker and a good speaker with a cheerful disposition. Very sociable, he had also a fine gift for administration with a good measure of ability to adapt himself to all kinds of situations without getting angry. These qualities made him the most popular figure in the synod and its

almost lifelong president. Now and then he would thunderously attack a situation like a fighter, or, when he thought it necessary, skillfully make it serve his purposes.

In important matters Bading's administration was based entirely on the theology and theoretical insight of Hoenecke, with whom he was on the most intimate terms. It was this circumstance which in times of danger and of the new developments in synodical relationships prevented our synod and the joint synod as well as the Synodical Conference from being harmed and which kept them on the right track. There were disputes and troubles among us that should not be made public. Hoenecke would suggest a solution, and Bading would implement it in a friendly and peaceful spirit. Hoenecke was the power behind the throne in the best sense. One can well say that until Hoenecke's death, Hoenecke and Bading determined the character and course of the Wisconsin Synod and later of the larger synod as well, as far as these can be determined at all by men. In saying this, we are not taking into account the resolution of the early Watertown situation.

It was above all the work of Hoenecke, who influenced Bading in his dealings, that the Wisconsin Synod in the period from 1866 to 1868 did not succumb to the coaxing of the Iowa Synod but, in spite of all the personal vexations, came to an understanding and allied itself with Missouri. Hoenecke, who was thoroughly familiar with the Prussian *gymnasium* system, played a significant role in transforming the Watertown institution into the kind of school envisioned by Professor Ernst. It was almost solely due to Hoenecke that Wisconsin and Minnesota stayed on the right track in the election controversy. At that time even many synodical pillars in Wisconsin and Minnesota vacillated. A strong anti-Missouri spirit arose. Without Hoenecke, humanly speaking, we would at that time have fallen into false doctrine or broken up. Even before this, Hoenecke was known by many as a "predestinationist" and was viewed by them with suspicion.

When the conflict began and opinions in the synod diverged, it quickly became known that Hoenecke and the entire seminary faculty stood on Walther's side. (Our own seminary had again been opened in Milwaukee in 1878, and Hoenecke had naturally been chosen as director.) That immediately put a strong restraint on the opposing side. Hoenecke stood firmly, calmly and judiciously with Walther. In the presence of others he discussed with Walther certain expressions he had used that were open to misunderstanding and persuaded him to issue a public clarification. At the same time he brought about a joyful acceptance of the true doctrine among the pastors of the synod by his clear, objective presentation, his successful proof and his firm testimony. Only some small doubtful elements in the synod were not won over, and they withdrew.

With great firmness Hoenecke declared that the issue was not a peculiar doctrine of Missouri, but the clear, eternal truth of the gospel. He demanded a forthright confession of the clear doctrine of Scripture and declared that he would terminate fellowship with everyone who intended to advocate the Schmidt-Stellhorn doctrine. In 1882 in La Crosse, where representatives of Minnesota also were present, the synod's position was decided. This decision not only wove a strong new bond of brotherhood between Wisconsin, Minnesota and Missouri, but also served effectively to unify Wisconsin and Minnesota. Internal differences receded into the background. As the election controversy continued, the position that had been taken forced everyone to make a careful study of Scripture and the Confessions. This produced a deeper grasp of the gospel, a great spiritual strengthening and more cheerful cooperation in synodical work.

With the reestablishment of the synod's own seminary in 1878, the foundation was laid for an effective cure of the synod's sickness, its lack of purpose. At the seminary August Graebner and Eugen Notz, both students of Walther, served as instructors together with Hoenecke. In time the old members of the synod died off, and a new generation of pastors came out of the seminary that was uniformly trained and possessed a synodical-family outlook. Individuals from the outside continued to join the synod; but the seminary, if it prospered, would gradually have to provide the great majority of pastors.

And the seminary did prosper and had exactly the effect that was anticipated. It is self-evident that Hoenecke imprinted his commanding spirit on the students, although he himself wanted nothing less than to create a following. But create one he did, nevertheless. He was above all, like Walther, a dogmatist and made his students as correct in doctrine and as firm and faithful in sound Lutheranism as Walther did. But in the process they across the board acquired something of Hoenecke's evangelical and charitable spirit which did not immediately brand as heresy everything that was not expressed by others in the same dogmatical formulas. In

his dogmatics Hoenecke often went into the smallest details. As his book shows, his dogmatics was, like Walther's, very long and comprehensive. But he did much less drilling than Walther and seldom covered all the material with a class. Nonetheless, the students became sound in doctrine and developed into edifying preachers.

Hoenecke produced few great orators, but he did turn out a relatively large number of independent thinkers, preachers who were faithful to the Scriptures, and wise and faithful pastors. What he himself did not possess, he could not, of course, impart to his students. He was always concerned about an inner effect, and so he produced neither frenzied workers nor workmen overly concerned about outward forms. The strong synodical push which Walther instilled in most of his students was lacking in Hoenecke's students, if they did not acquire it elsewhere. He had as little interest in outwardly imposing projects, new buildings and missions as in new ecclesiastical formations. In the establishment of our Indian mission he saw a piece of misapplied pietistic mission zeal. In his view, it divided the synod's strength, which even without this was not abundant. He saw it, therefore, as harmful to the existing synodical endeavors. With strong indignation he spoke about a *spiritus missionaricus* that was gaining ground. For a long time this attitude of Hoenecke's was a contributing factor in the conduct of our Indian mission until Harder's ardent love for the Apaches broke the ice of the hard Indian hearts and won our hearts over for this mission.

Hoenecke's influence on the spirit and work of the synod would have been greater if our Watertown institution had provided more students for the seminary. But in spite of the fact that the synod always concentrated its energy mainly on building up both internally and externally the Watertown school, its first and mother institution, and in spite of the fact that in the course of years the school educated a very considerable number of students, its output of theological students—with the exception of a few individual years—remained small. This is not the place to express our personal judgment about the various causes for this abnormal phenomenon. But the fact itself is very obvious, and its abnormality should be evident to everyone also. It will also not disappear if the synod does not learn to concentrate its work in all areas on the one main issue instead of spreading itself thin in many directions.

Like Walther, Hoenecke came from Germany and was cast in the mold of a theologian of the old style. For him, too, dogmatics was the principal subject, and he handled it much like Walther, except that he put a stop to the pedantry of using Latin in teaching. But he regarded it as his duty to lead his students into the language and the precise and subtle logical terminology of our fathers. For him the training of not only sound, but also clear-thinking and competent theologians depended on this. He was opposed to the modern so-called positive theology, including the Lutheran, not only because of its false basic position, but also because of its wrong systematizing and its poor logic. But in this he had to contend with similar obstacles as Walther did. In their training in the old languages most of his students had not advanced far enough to enable them to benefit fully from the old orthodox authors. In the course of years this deficiency of our Watertown school has become only greater and more injurious under the influence of life in the modern world, which is becoming more and more materialistic.

When Hoenecke did not dictate, he spoke German and sought to lead his students in their mother tongue to understand the content and method of our old dogmatics. In doing this he was in principle and practice a more scriptural theologian than Walther. The orthodox dogmaticians were not authorities for him to the same extent as they were for Walther. He tested them more critically. He sought to lead his students directly into Scripture and to base everything on Scripture. Nevertheless, for a long time for him and the seminary of his day this continued to be a piecemeal thing. Hoenecke restricted himself all too much to a study of individual passages in dogmatics and for preaching. Vigorously pursued direct biblical theology did not come until later.

The results of this practice did not fail to appear. Hoenecke's students, like Walther's, were not properly led into Scripture. After graduation they studied it all too little, did not live in it sufficiently and seldom penetrated to a deeper and richer grasp of the gospel of grace and to an intensive cultivation of a personal spiritual life. Walther said time and again that the well-being of the church is dependent on a pious ministry. He never said anything more true. Our effectiveness in winning souls does not lie in the measure of our learning, the keenness of our understanding, our oratorical ability or debating skills, but in the measure of our insight into

the gospel, our faith in the grace of Christ, our dedication to our Savior's concern—to rescue lost sinners—and the degree of our personal edification and sanctification. And all of that can be acquired only through unceasing prayerful reading, studying, meditating on, understanding and personally appropriating the Holy Scriptures, which offer us the gospel in perfect fullness.

Dogmatics is altogether indispensable. Without it we cannot keep the gospel pure. But it is in constant danger of losing the spirit of the gospel and becoming a dead skeleton as a result of processes that involve the intellect alone. History is altogether indispensable. Only history teaches us to understand God's government of the world. Homiletics, catechetics and all practical subjects are altogether indispensable. They teach one how to put the Word to work in the church. But they must get their content, spirit and power from Scripture. We can work effectively in the church only to the extent that we personally live in Scripture. That church will produce the best pastors which most effectively leads its high school, college and seminary students into Scripture both outwardly and inwardly.

A complete description of the distinctive character of the Wisconsin Synod would include a sketch of still other eminent men who exercised a not insignificant influence on the outward form and inner life of the synod. But the subject is too recent to be described.

The newness of the situation also prevents us from going into more detail regarding the characteristics of our sister synods which hesitantly but now finally have united with us organically.^{x1} Minnesota was and is today as similar to us of Wisconsin as two peas in a pod. It traveled the very same road from confessional uncertainty to a clear and firm position and—perhaps better than we did—from synodical confusion to united work for clear and specific concrete goals. New Ulm's thorough work, especially since it became a training school for teachers, contributed in no small way to building up the synod. But in Minnesota, as in Wisconsin, things are still a long way from being in perfect order.

In Michigan the synodical situation before it joined us was more confused and stormy than in Minnesota and even than in Wisconsin in its beginnings. Since then it has achieved internal peace and is accomplishing new and positive work, not only in its congregational activities, but also in missions and the training of pastors. The three synods' original craving for independence and individuality has disappeared now that they have merged, and we are continually growing closer together. We now think of ourselves as just one synod in which all of us are carrying on the same work. As our spiritual depth and strength increase, the energy and effectiveness of the joint synod will grow.

The present time is making entirely new and strong demands on our spiritual strength. The madly rapid transition to English requires enormous labors on the part of our pastors. Not only our future growth but also the preservation of the gospel in its purity among our descendants depends on the right solution to the school question. The lodge question confronts us with an inescapable either-or, if we want to remain faithful and not lose everything that has been handed down to us through God's grace. Whether we will steer the church safely through these rapids depends above all on the spirit which prevails in our schools, on a clear understanding by our teachers of the gospel and of the antichristian character of our times, on their pedagogical wisdom and faithfulness, and on energetically concentrating in all our teaching and training on the great principal requirement in the education of pastors and teachers. Either we will succeed in training servants of the church who with all their heart are pious, faithful and academically proficient, or we will inevitably go under. With the necessary faithfulness in the educational process, we will weather all dangers and win the victory for the gospel.

We have revised the curriculum in all our educational institutions and tried to adjust it to modern requirements. We will have to continue to revise and simplify it. We will have to concentrate still more on the subjects which are absolutely the most important. We have in part lengthened the courses and called more instructors for the work. We cannot stop with this. Meanwhile, the pastors and teachers who are presently in the ministry will need to deepen themselves even more in the gospel and draw new strength from the fountain of Israel.

We laid the foundation for a new program of seminary studies already in Hoenecke's time. We have removed dogmatics from its earlier place as queen of the disciplines and put the emphasis on a direct study of the Scriptures in isagogics and exegesis together with church history. We lead all students, if not through all the

books of the Old and New Testaments, at least through the principal ones. In the exegesis of and introduction to each biblical book we try above all to inculcate in the students the line of thought of the book, especially bringing out its evangelical content and impressing on them how it applies to their own souls and can be used in preaching and pastoral work. In exegesis special care is taken to stress exactness in details.

We occupy ourselves with Scripture, however, not primarily for later use in the ministry, but above all for our own souls. Each of the five seminary instructors handles a portion of the study of Scripture, either as his principal or as a secondary field. Our aim is to grow spiritually in as many ways as possible. We do work in dogmatics in order to let the doctrines of Scripture shine forth clearly and correctly over against all errors and in order to strengthen the students' ability to think clearly. More emphasis is placed on homiletics, catechetics and pastoral theology than before. In all these subjects the students are shown by means of theory and example how to work with Scripture. While technical skills are not neglected, every sermon and catechesis must nevertheless bring out the content of the text in its original logical context.

Our seminary students are taught with special emphasis that in all congregational work God's Word is the only effective means for true edification and the only governing authority in the church. Its majesty is inviolable. We may well say that the great majority of our seminary students live and move in God's Word not only in the classroom but also in the study, and that in general we send out pious, capable and diligent young pastors into the ministry.

We also seek to develop in our students a proper, sober and loyal attitude toward the synod, while we oppose synodical jingoism as a repugnant distortion of faithfulness in the work. We teach them not to compare the Wisconsin Synod with Missouri in their preaching, and, if possible, not to mention the synod at all. They should not preach and praise Wisconsin, but our Lord Jesus Christ. They should not exalt human organizations and works, but the Savior of sinners. They should not seek their own welfare, but only that of Christ's kingdom. They should expend themselves in serving the church without asking what they will get in return. In all matters and under all circumstances they should stand up for even the least significant Word of God and not deviate from it, even if heaven and earth and whatever will not endure should crumble.^{xli}

We know very well that our work is very imperfect and feeble and suffers from serious mistakes. How much we have accomplished with respect to the souls of our students, faithful work on their part and the actual winning and edifying of souls, God alone knows. But of one thing we are certain: our diligent working with Scripture at this time and under our circumstances is the right means to produce pious, faithful and capable pastors.

As members of the Wisconsin Synod we don't exactly have reason to be proud of our past, but we have every reason to thank God that he has permitted us to learn to know his Son and the pure gospel and that he has preserved this knowledge for us to the present. We have suffered greatly from a lack of unity and purpose, from synodical intrigues and feebleness in our efforts—to the great detriment of the church. To this day we have not yet overcome these evils. But a beginning toward curing them has been made. If we but keep from losing an evangelical heart, if we but keep from becoming mechanical workmen in our ministry, if we but live diligently in God's Word, then the curing of all evils must follow. There will never, of course, be a flawless church body here on earth.

IV.

[Omitted are two sections of the essay in which the author, a student of Walther's, critically analyzes conditions in the Wisconsin Synod in his day. His emphasis in this concluding installment on the importance of a pious ministry for the well-being of the church is a theme repeatedly stressed by Walther.]

The weal and woe of the church depends largely on the competence of its servants, that is, on their evangelical understanding and faithfulness. As far as God is concerned, of course, the destiny of the church is not dependent on anything human beings do or fail to do. The number of those who belong to the church, the way it is guided, tested and strengthened, its growth, its spiritual development, its preservation—the whole course of the church's history is unalterably determined in advance down to the smallest detail by God's eternal

election and providential care in Christ Jesus. Human faithfulness or unfaithfulness does not alter that one bit. God has placed his church under the care of the Good Shepherd, and no one will snatch even a single sheep out of his hand (Jn 10:28, 29). If the destiny of God's children were dependent on the faithfulness of pastors, not a single soul would be saved.

This is said for our comfort, so that our faith does not become weak and that we do not fall into despair when storms rage and the little ship is covered with waves. It is said to keep us humble, so that we do not get the idea that it is *our* achievement when God grants the church one victory after another. It is not told us so that we become unfaithful and lazy, as if we could conclude from the fact that God works all in all (1 Cor 12:6) that our faithfulness does no good or our unfaithfulness does no harm. From a human standpoint, God's counsel is paradoxical and illogical: "God works in us to will and to act according to his good purpose. Therefore continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling" (Php 2:13, 12).

God has decided to carry out his eternal plans through human beings. To that end heaven and earth must serve him. In particular, he has instituted the public ministry to gather, care for and save his church. For that purpose he has given his Word in a fixed, written form that will outlast time and be available to all the world, giving the instructions, "Diligently study the Scriptures!" (Jn 5:39). To that end he has given all Christians the ministry of being his witnesses with the command, "Preach the good news to all creation!" (Mk 16:15). To both forms of the ministry he has attached the promise of his Holy Spirit. Through him he intends to accomplish everything that is necessary to perfect his church and bring it to glory. Of both types of ministry he says, "O land, land, land, hear the word of the Lord!" (Jr 22:29) and threatens, "He who scorns instruction will pay for it" (Pr 13:13). "He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me" (Lk 10:16).

To us preachers and teachers in particular he has given the admonition to be faithful. He promises us every blessing in this life and in that to come if we are faithful and threatens us with every curse in this world and the next if we are unfaithful. He speaks as though the welfare of the whole church and of every individual soul depends on this. And that is just as sure and certain as his word that no one will snatch his sheep out of his hand.

For this reason we say: the well-being of the church depends on the faithfulness of its servants. This truth is so clear and plain that it has been expressed in the proverb, "Like shepherd, like sheep." The Lord wants to build his church especially through us, through our ministry (Eph 4), and he holds us personally accountable for every individual soul (Eze 3 and 33; Mt 18:6ff). Nonetheless, nothing more is required than that "those who have been given a trust must prove faithful" (1 Cor 4:2). It is *faithfulness* that the Lord requires of us, nothing more, nothing less. Among us Christians that is a well-known and self-evident truth. But it is just such truths that we forget first.

Pastoral faithfulness is not, however, something purely external. It is not discharged by a mere outward fulfilling of one's duty. Certainly this belongs to it. Whoever does not teach God's Word in a way that outwardly is doctrinally correct is not a faithful shepherd. Teaching pure doctrine is part of being a faithful teacher. But not everyone who restates and recites pure doctrine is actually faithful. Outward correctness in the administration of the sacraments, outward diligence in private pastoral care and irreproachable outward conduct are not in themselves infallible proofs that one is faithful in the ministry, indispensable as these things are to faithfulness.

Faithfulness is something within a person. It is a disposition, an attitude, of the heart. Being faithful means being faithful in one's *intentions*—not toward oneself, but toward others, namely, toward God and one's fellow human beings. For a servant of Christ, being faithful means being devoted to God and to Christ with one's whole being and with complete self-denial. It means putting oneself totally into God's service and taking his side resolutely until death against all his rivals and enemies.

Pastoral faithfulness is thus entirely a matter of an inner personal sacrifice of oneself to the Lord. It includes faithfulness toward all sinners, toward the church and toward every individual soul. Like his Lord, the faithful servant of Christ has only *one* goal: to seek and to save what was lost, to give each soul what it needs at the proper time. The faithful pastor does not take himself into consideration. He expends all his possessions, his body and life in serving Christ and the souls entrusted to his care, in the work of building up the church. His

attitude toward Christ is one of absolute willing obedience and of unshakable childlike confidence in spite of all the enticements and threats of the world. Toward all people he has only a savior's heart that wants to set them free from sin and save them, nothing else. As his Lord is, so is he. That is what the Lord means when he exhorts us in particular, "Be faithful, even to the point of death!" (Re 2:10).

Anyone who does not have this attitude is not a faithful servant of Christ, no matter how diligent, active and outwardly successful he might be in his church work. The Lord looks at the heart. But, thank God, we don't have much reason to complain as yet about hired hands in the public ministry of the church. The ministry does not offer enough earthly advantages to attract unbelieving or worldly-minded people. Anyone who is interested in money, prestige and influence or in the pleasures of the flesh will turn in our land of unlimited opportunities to some other occupation than that of a Lutheran pastor. Most such people drop out while studying for the ministry or leave the ministry after being in it for a few years because they consider it an unbearable burden.

When we speak among ourselves about unfaithfulness in the public ministry of the church, we always mean falling short to a greater or lesser degree of an ideal perfection in one's attitude of faithfulness toward the Lord and his people, a falling short which Scripture designates with the expression *lukewarmness* and a losing of one's first love. In personal conduct this becomes manifest as carelessness, and in the work of the ministry it shows itself in the form of laziness and negligence. It becomes especially apparent in a lack of sanctification and a failure to crucify one's own flesh. It is more or less what Paul refers to when he says, "I have a desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out" (Ro 7:18).

There is no question that especially in us who are servants of the Word a first love ought to burn brightly and show itself in a never-tiring diligence in doing the work assigned to us. From what has been previously said, it is clear also that the present situation of the Lutheran church in our country, involving our change-over to English, the battle against lodgery, the preservation and development of our Christian schools, the reestablishment in the home of Christian training, which has almost completely fallen by the wayside—all this requires of us a high degree of zeal for the Lord's house and an altogether exceptional amount of work.

What our church needs today is not a great spiritual leader—we all know what God wants us to do—but rather many faithful pastors, professors and teachers, every one of whom stands his ground at his post in every article of the gospel against the devil and his deceptions and joyfully and diligently carries out every responsibility circumstances require of him. More than ever in our church the question to be answered by every servant of Christ is not: How much do I *have* to do in my ministry in order to pass examination by human beings? but rather: How much *can* I do in order that the kingdom of God may come?

How shall we reach that point? I know of no other counsel than that of Asaph—that we "enter the sanctuary of God" (Ps 73:17). For us who are teachers in the church that is not a church building, but our little den, our *study*. Public gatherings of Christians, congregational worship services, synodical conventions and conferences are, of course, necessary and have the promise of great blessings, also for us who are servants of the Word, if we come together harmoniously in a spirit of love. But let us be sure of this: a real increase and deepening of our knowledge of the gospel, a burning zeal of the spirit and joy in testifying, a happy zest for work, an invincible strength in suffering for the gospel, a patience to bear up under every cross and in every adversity—these we do not get through joint family devotions, but only in our little den, in our communion in private in our study with our great Friend and Brother, the Shepherd of our own soul and the Chief Shepherd of the church, Jesus Christ.

The most dreadful thing on earth is being alone with our sins and the miseries of this life. The most blessed thing is being alone with Christ. Friedrich Rueckert sings:

Come in, Lord, through the portals of my heart
And close them that we may commune apart.^{xlii}

Alone with Jesus—to tell him in private about all our troubles and the wretchedness brought on by our sins, about our unfaithfulness, our trials, temptations and crosses, and to plead with him for grace and patience, for his Spirit and the strength to carry out our ministry, for his blessing on our labors, for the conversion of the

ungodly, for the strengthening and growth of his church, for humility, meekness and patience, for truthfulness, purity and steadfastness. Alone with Jesus—in order to hear from his own mouth the absolution in the Scriptures, to receive new comfort, gain new insights and experience new streams of the Spirit, new joy and strength. Yes, there is such a thing as joining John in lying on the Lord’s breast amid the storms of life and being comforted. “As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you” (Is 66:13).

To study and pray, pray and study in one’s own little den—that produces competent preachers and teachers, faithful shepherds of Christ’s flock.

We American pastors, also we who are German-Americans, with the exception of a few bookworms, study too little. Only too often we are satisfied with what we learned in school. When we are in the ministry, we do not of our own accord continue the studies we were more or less forced to pursue when we were in school. We read a lot, but we don’t study. Reading is entertainment, whiling away the time; study is hard work. We so easily become lazy in the study. Oh, how the reading of newspapers, magazines and novels makes a person indolent and superficial, how it kills the spirit and pollutes and brutalizes the soul!^{xliii} But theology, which is part and parcel of our sacred office, we do not study. Most days of the week we may even leave the Bible itself unopened on our desk.

Our study of Scripture is restricted for the most part to what we need for the Sunday sermon and conference papers. We grow old in the ministry, therefore, without becoming well versed in Scripture and at home in it. We should certainly be familiar with all of Scripture and have in our head the chief books of the Bible: Genesis, the books of Samuel, the principal Psalms, Job and Isaiah, Matthew and John, Acts, Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, First John and First Peter, as well as the Pastoral Epistles. We ought to be able to draw on them at once in our preaching, instructing and private pastoral care. We ought to be able to recall the contents of these books in their historical, poetical or logical line of thought. We should certainly also be masters exegetically of the deeper and more difficult doctrinal passages of Holy Scripture.

The Bible is, of course, our textbook, the book that we should preach. Why then do we know so much about so many other books, but the book of our profession we do not know, or know only superficially? That surely is not faithfulness in the ministry!

But woe to us if the Bible is nothing but a textbook for our professional teaching! Woe to us if its contents are nothing more than a salesman’s wares that we take out of a drawer and lay on the table in our preaching, instructing and pastoral care and sell to our congregation members as our customers without making use of them ourselves! All purely professional Bible study, even if it is as exacting, thorough and exhaustive as that of the Bible critics, is a curse. It hardens the soul so that it becomes indifferent and eventually resists and loathes the gospel and all biblical truth.

No, it is not a matter of simply knowing Scripture. All knowledge of Scripture must be faith, spirit and life given by the Holy Spirit. Otherwise it leads to nothing but damnation. It will be a blessing for us only if we pursue our Bible study—also our Bible study for our ministerial work—first of all for the salvation and sanctification of our own soul, which is burdened with the *guilt* of sin and in bondage to the *lust* of sin. It will be a blessing only if we gain from Scripture an ever deeper and more comprehensive understanding of our sinful corruption and an ever greater joy and more certain comfort from our salvation through Christ.

Not as a salesman buys his wares in order to sell them again, but as a bee sucks honey from blossoms so as to nourish itself at the same time, so we by our studying ought to draw the gospel out of the Scriptures in order to save ourselves and those who hear us. That will in turn produce also in our ministerial work a clear, certain, joyful and warm testimony, which, going from the heart to the heart, will grip our hearers with divine power and bring about repentance, faith and sanctification.

But all preaching and teaching and all studying must be done with prayer. Many a sermon is the result of diligent study and fine craftsmanship. It may perhaps even be delivered in an exemplary way. And yet it does not touch people’s hearts. Much human effort and skill have been expended on it, but it lacks the power of the Holy Spirit. Human wisdom and human skill, logic and rhetoric have no converting power in and of themselves. Even if such a sermon has the outward characteristics of personal testimony, it does not have this effect. The converting power comes only from the powerful testimony of the Holy Spirit in and with the Word that is

preached. For as certain as it is that the divine Word itself is never emptied of its divine power, so certain is it, on the other hand, that the Holy Spirit works through the Word “where and when it pleases God.”^{xliiv} And he wants to be asked in prayer to do his work. “If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him” (Lk 11:13). Here a word from Schiller’s “*Die Glocke*” applies:

A work that brings a craftsman praise
Costs him sweat and tearful days;
But a blessing on his labor
All depends on heaven’s favor.^{xlv}

In the parsonage, in the pastor’s study, in his little den are the sources of the church’s strength. If this little den becomes cold and empty, or if it is dedicated to the Old Adam and the spirit of this world, the church’s strength will evaporate, and the spirit of the world will overwhelm it. If, on the other hand, the Spirit’s fire burns in the pastor’s praying and studying, new streams of the Spirit will flow out daily to God’s people.

But that is the great evil of the church in our day: we pastors and teachers of the church do not study enough, and we pray even less. We are so busy with ecclesiastical externals, and our spiritual life is all too sterile. The latter ought to be first and foremost and govern the former. We make externals the important thing and forcibly dry up our inner, spiritual life. The result is that we become more and more stunted as far as having the Holy Spirit is concerned, our religion eventually becomes a mere formality, and we drag the church down with us into this maelstrom.

When pastors and teachers have a sluggish nature, the whole life of the church and school becomes a dull outward habit without spirit or life. It accomplishes nothing and finally dies off completely. When, on the other hand, they have an energetic and active nature, it effuses in a lot of outward bustle. They build large, expensive and magnificent churches, educational and charitable institutions, beautiful parsonages and club facilities and settle down mundanely in this world. They deceive themselves with the vain delusion that things are going splendidly in the church because they supposedly still have the pure doctrine. Actually, of course, the spirit of the pure gospel has disappeared and has given way more and more to a superficial sectarian and worldly spirit.

That is our evil, and its source lies in the study, in the pastor’s little prayer cell, from which the Spirit has fled because we pray and study only in connection with our work and all too little for the sake of our own soul.

If a halt is to be called to the further ruin of the Lutheran church in our land and a new springtime of the Spirit is to burst upon it, there must first of all be a new Pentecost—in the pastor’s study.

ⁱ St. L., XXIa, 1093; Ewald M. Pless, *What Luther Says* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), #2679.

ⁱⁱ LW 37, 40.

ⁱⁱⁱ FC, Ep, Summary 1; *Triglotta*, 777.

^{iv} *Baler oxsen*, literally, slaving away at Baier.

^v Prof. Pieper’s students tell that he would on occasion lay aside the day’s work, announce, “*Heute wollen wir Stimmung machen*,” and spend the class period inspiring them for the work of the ministry—something he undoubtedly learned from Walther.

^{vi} There was, of course, no real controversy among the Lutherans about election, as the Formula of Concord freely admits (XI, 1; Trig., 831, 1063).

^{vii} Ludwig H. Ihmels, *Die Christliche Wahrheitsgewiszheit, ihr letzter Grund und ihre Entstehung*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: Werner Scholl, 1914).

^{viii} Reinhold Seeberg, *Die Kirche Deutschlands im 19. Jahrhundert*, 2nd ed (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1904), pp 309, 314.

^{ix} LW 33, 3ff.

^x See *Der Lutheraner*, VI (1849), 1, p 2.

^{xi} LW 35, 175ff.

^{xii} See *Lehre und Wehre*, XIV (1868), p 100 ff.

- ^{xiii} Prof. Pieper is undoubtedly referring to R. C. H. Lenski, who in 1905 publicly attacked the doctrine of objective justification in the Ohio Synod's *Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* (ed.).
- ^{xiv} The reference is to F. A. Schmidt, Walther's student and colleague in St. Louis from 1872–76, who in 1879 charged him with a false doctrine of election (ed.).
- ^{xv} See *Der Lutheraner*, VI (1849), supplement, p 3ff.
- ^{xvi} On this point see Armin W. Schuetze and Irwin J. Habeck, *The Shepherd under Christ* (Milwaukee: Northwestern, 1974), pp 270f. (ed.).
- ^{xvii} *Proceedings of the Synodical Conference*, 1874, p 14ff.
- ^{xviii} The Form of a Christian Congregation, translated by J. T. Mueller (St. Louis: Concordia, 1963), #1, especially Note 3, pp 1–3.
- ^{xix} *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt*, 4th ed. (Zwickau i. S., 1894). A translation of the theses and scriptural proof is found in William Dallmann, W. H. T. Dau, and Th. Engelder, *Walther and the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1938), pp 56–86. For an analysis of the theses see Carl Lawrenz, "An Evaluation of Walther's Theses on the Church and Its Ministry," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 79, No. 2 (Spring 1982), pp 85–139 (ed.).
- ^{xx} *Proceedings of the Synodical Conference*, 1876, pp 39–44.
- ^{xxi} Vol. 27 (1881), No. 1, pp 43ff.
- ^{xxii} A pietistic devotional writer and preacher (1705–61) (ed.).
- ^{xxiii} September 12 and 19, 1848, and September 4, 1849.
- ^{xxiv} *Der Lutheraner*, VI (1849), 1, p 2, col. 3.
- ^{xxv} *Ibid.*
- ^{xxvi} These were the so-called *gymnasia*, which were a combination high school and junior college (ed.).
- ^{xxvii} Literally, piddling porisms, meaning something like concocting conclusions. Euclid, the mathematician, wrote three books of porisms, which have been lost. A porism is a deduction drawn from a set of principles (ed.).
- ^{xxviii} See *Der Lutheraner*, VII (1850), p 82.
- ^{xxix} See *Geschichte der Minnesota-Synode und ihre einzelnen Gemeinden* (St. Louis: Louis Lange, 1909), p 13, and *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Synod*, 1878.
- ^{xxx} See E. A. Wilh. Krauss, *Lebensbilder aus der Geschichte der christlichen Kirche* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1910 and 1930), p 725.
- ^{xxxi} See Chr. Hochstetter, *Die Geschichte der Evangelisch-lutherischen Missouri Synode in Nord-Amerika* (Dresden: Heinrich J. Naumann, 1885), pp 18ff, and Martin Guenther, *Dr. C. F. W. Walther, Lebensbild* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1890).
- ^{xxxii} The Prussian Union of 1817 was a state-forced union of the Lutheran and Reformed churches (ed.).
- ^{xxxiii} Arthur Hoermann, *Unser Northwestern College, Sein Werden und Wachsen* (Watertown, Wisconsin, 1915), p 13. An English translation appears in the same volume under the title, *Our Northwestern College, The Story of its Origin and Growth*. The translation is by Hans Koller Moussa. The citation is on p 16 of the translation.
- ^{xxxiv} *Ibid.*, p 16 (p 18, English).
- ^{xxxv} Adam Martin, MA, was born in Buderhausen, Bavaria, in 1835. He received his education at Hamilton College, Clinton, New York, and Hartwick Seminary, Cooperstown, New York. Before coming to Watertown, he was a pastor in Middleburgh, New York, and then taught at Hartwick College. He was at Northwestern from 1865 to 1869 and then served as professor of the German language and literature at Pennsylvania College in Gettysburg until 1898. He died at New Haven in 1921 (ed.).
- ^{xxxvi} Hoermann, p 10f (p 13f, English).
- ^{xxxvii} *Ibid.*, p 11 (p 14, English).
- ^{xxxviii} *Ibid.*
- ^{xxxix} *Ibid.*, p 21 (p 24, English).
- ^{xl} In 1917 the federation formed in 1892 and known as *Die Allgemeine Ev. Luth. Synode von Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan u.a. St.* was reorganized as the Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States (ed.).
- ^{xli} The seminary curriculum, objectives and methods Professor Pieper is describing in these paragraphs constitute what has come to be known as the "Wauwatosa theology," because the seminary was located in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, at that time. Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary still follows these principles in its pastor training program today (ed.).
- ^{xlii} Friedrich Rueckert, a German scholar and poet (1788–1866), wrote:
*Kehr ein bei mir and schliesze du
 Still hinter dir die Pforten zu!*
- ^{xliiii} Professor Pieper, who died in 1946, did not live to see the addictive and pernicious influence TV may have.
- ^{xliv} Augsburg Confession, Art V; *Triglotta*, 45.
- ^{xlv} Schiller wrote:
*Von der Stirne heisz
 rinnen musz der Schweisz,
 soil das Werk den Meister loben;
 doch der Segen kommt von oben.*